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Old Eng. (Eng 111A) - Thurs. May 10-9-301 W

Hegel on Tragedy.

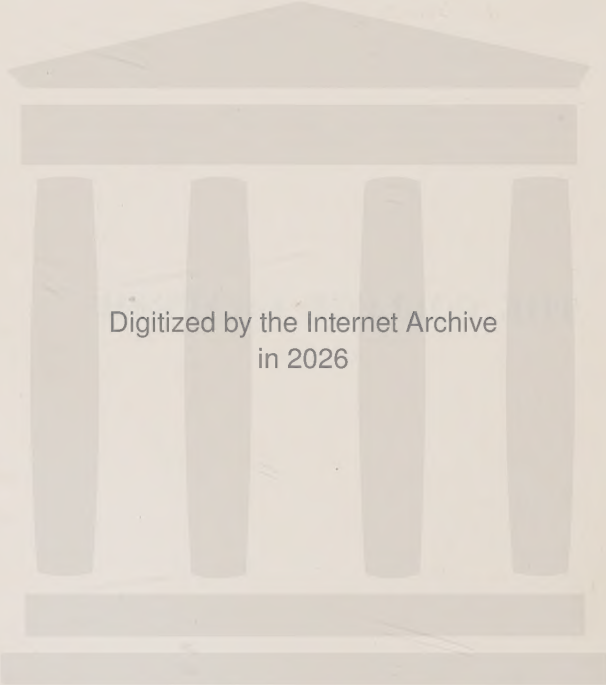
Exist. vs Ess. = Tragedy

Conflict betw 2 obj. subj. of the idea.

distinctive
harmonizing
of dif.
subjective
of the Good



THE COLLEGE CHAUCER



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THE COLLEGE CHAUCER

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PREFACE

THE COLLEGE CHAUCER aims to provide, with due regard to the moderate size, attractive page, and readable print required in a modern textbook, as much of Chaucer as can be given in a single volume. The teacher will find, no doubt, more than he will choose to read with his class in any one year; but he may welcome the opportunity offered here of varying his course from year to year without change of text, and the possibilities presented of full cross-reference and helpful "outside" readings.

In this endeavor to give Chaucer *in extenso*, the editorial apparatus has been compressed within the smallest possible compass, while a glossary of greater than average fullness supplies the place of the usual notes. The Appendix contains only such additional matter as the beginner absolutely needs before attempting to read Middle English.

There is very general agreement among teachers that the student learns most by approaching Chaucer, not through a text normalized and corrected on an editorial theory as to standard mediæval spelling, but directly through the actual forms of the early and authoritative manuscripts. The one danger in this plan, of confusion in morphology and pronunciation, is greatly lessened in this edition by etymologies given in the glossary, which supply source-materials for correction of manuscript peculiarities. On the other hand, the student has not been relieved of his proper labor, by any device of friendly dots or italics. Footnotes are reserved for the indication of necessary variation from manuscript readings.

The editor gratefully thanks Professor W. W. Lawrence of Columbia University for his proposal of the plan fol-

lowed in this volume, and for his kindness in reading a part of the proof. Mr. T. G. Wright's collaboration has been of great assistance, not only in the glossarial labor, but in numerous suggestions elsewhere.

New Haven,
May, 1913

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THE COLLEGE CHAUCER

THE CANTERBURY TALES

GROUP A

PROLOGUE

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunterbury.

Whan that Aprille, with hise shoures soote,
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth 5
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open eye— 10
So priketh hem Nature in hir corages—
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende 15
Of Engelond, to Caunturbury they wende,
The hooly blisful martir for to seke
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seeked.
Bifil that in that seson, on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay, 20
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury, with ful devout corage,
At nyght were come into that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye
Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle 25

In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,
 That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
 The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
 And wel we weren esed atte beste;
 And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste, 30
 So hadde I spoken with hem everychon
 That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,
 And made forward erly for to ryse
 To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.

But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space, 35
 Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
 Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
 To telle yow al the condicioun
 Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
 And whiche they weren, and of what degree, 40
 And eek in what array that they were inne;
 And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.

A knyght ther was, and that a worthy man, Knyght
 That fro the tyme that he first bigan
 To riden out, he loved chivalrie, 45
 Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.
 Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
 And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
 As wel in Cristendom as in Hethenesse,
 And evere honoured for his worthynesse. 50

At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne;
 Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
 Aboven alle nacions in Puce;
 In Lettow hadde he reysed, and in Ruce,
 No cristen man so ofte of his degree. 55
 In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
 Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye;
 At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
 Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
 At many a noble arive hadde he be. 60

At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
 And foughten for oure feith at Tramysene
 In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo.
 This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also
 Somtyme with the lord of Palatye 65
 Agayn another hethen in Turkye,
 And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
 And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
 And of his port as meeke as is a mayde;
 He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde 70
 In al his lyf unto no maner wight;
 He was a verray parfit gentil knyght.

But for to tellen yow of his array,
 His hors weren goode, but he was nat gay.
 Of fustian he wered a gypoun, 75
 Al bismotered with his habergeoun;
 For he was late ycome from his viage,
 And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.

With hym ther was his sone, a yong Squier, Squier
 A lovyere and a lusty bacheler, 80
 With lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in presse.
 Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
 Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
 And wonderly delyvere, and of greet strengthe.
 And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie 85
 In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie,
 And born hym weel, as of so litel space,
 In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
 Embrouded was he, as it were a meede,
 Al ful of fresshe floures whyte and reede; 90
 Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day,
 He was as fressh as is the monthe of May.
 Short was his gowne, with sleeves longe and wyde.
 Wel koude he sitte on hors, and faire ryde,
 He koude songes make, and wel endite, 95
 Juste, and eek daunce, and weel purtreye and write.

So hoote he lovede, that by nyghtertale
 He slepte namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.
 Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,
 And carf biforn his fader at the table. 100

A Yeman hadde he, and servantz namo 105
 At that tyme, for hym liste ride soo;
 And he was clad in cote and hood of grene,
 A sheef of pecok arwes bright and kene
 Under his belt he bar ful thriftily— 110
 Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly,
 Hise arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe—
 And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.
 A not-heed hadde he, with a broun visage,
 Of woodecraft wel koude he al the usage. 115
 Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer,
 And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
 And on that oother syde a gay daggere,
 Harneised wel, and sharpe as point of spere.
 A Cristophere on his brest of silver sheene, 120
 An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene.
 A Forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.

Ther was also a Nonne, a Prioresse, 125
 That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy.
 Hir gretteste ooth was but by Seinte Loy,
 And she was cleped Madame Eglentyne.
 Ful weel she soong the service dyvyne,
 Entuned in hir nose ful semely;
 And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly
 After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe, 130
 For Frenssh of Parys was to hir unknowe.
 At mete wel ytaught was she withalle;
 She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
 Ne wette hir fynGRES in hir sauce depe.
 Wel koude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe 135
 That no drope ne fille upon hir brist.

In curteisie was set ful muche hir list;
 Hire over-lippe wyped she so clene,
 That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene
 Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte. 135
 Ful semely after hir mete she raughte;
 And sikerly, she was of greet desport,
 And ful plesaunt, and amyable of port,
 And peyned hir to countrefete cheere
 Of court, and been estatlich of manere, 140
 And to ben holden digne of reverence.
 But for to speken of hir conscience,
 She was so charitable and so pitous,
 She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous
 Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde. 145
 Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde
 With rosted flessch, or milk and wastel-breed.
 But soore weep she if oon of hem were deed,
 Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte;
 And al was conscience, and tendre herte. 150
 Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was,
 Hire nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,
 Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed;
 But sikerly, she hadde a fair forheed,
 It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe, 155
 For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
 Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war;
 Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
 A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,
 And theron heng a brooch of gold ful sheene, 160
 On which ther was first write a crowned 'A,'
 And after, 'Amor vincit omnia.'

Another Nonne with hir hadde she, Nonne & .iiij. preestes
 That was hire Chapeleyne, and preestes thre.

A Monk ther was, a fair for the maistrie, Monk 165
 An outridere, that lovede venerie,

A manly man, to been an abbot able.
 Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable;
 And whan he rood, men myghte his brydel heere
 Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd als cleere, 170
 And eek as loude, as dooth the chapel belle,
 Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.
 The reule of Seint Maure, or of Seint Beneit,
 Bycause that it was old and somdel streit—
 This ilke Monk leet olde thynges pace, 175
 And heeld after the newe world the space.
 He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
 That seith that hunters beth nat hooly men,
 Ne that a monk, whan he is recchelees,
 Is likned til a fissh that is waterlees— 180
 This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloystre—
 But thilke text heeld he nat worth an oystre!
 And I seyde his opinioun was good,
 What sholde he studie, and make hymselfen wood,
 Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure, 185
 Or swynken with his handes and laboure
 As Austyn bit? How shal the world be served?
 Lat Austyn have his swynk to him reserved;
 Therefore he was a prikasour aright,
 Grehoundes he hadde, as swift as fowel in flight; 190
 Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare
 Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
 I seigh his sleves ypurfiled at the hond
 With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;
 And for to festne his hood under his chyn 195
 He hadde of gold ywroght a curious pyn;
 A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
 His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
 And eek his face, as it hadde been enoynt.
 He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt, 200
 Hise eyen stepe, and rollynge in his heed,

That stemed as a forneys of a leed;
 His bootes souple, his hors in greet estaat;
 Now certainly he was a fair prelaat!
 He was nat pale as a forpyned goost, 205
 A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
 His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.
 A Frere ther was, a wantowne and a merye, Frere
 A lymytour, a ful solempne man,
 In alle the ordres foure is noon that kan 210
 So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage.
 He hadde maad ful many a mariage
 Of yonge wommen at his owene cost.
 Unto his ordre he was a noble post,
 And wel biloved and famulier was he 215
 With frankeleyns overal in his contree
 And eek with worthy wommen of the toun,
 For he hadde power of confessioun,
 As seyde hymself, moore than a curat,
 For of his ordre he was licenciati. 220
 Ful swetely herde he confessioun,
 And plesaunt was his absolucioun,
 He was an esy man to yeve penaunce
 Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce;
 For unto a povre ordre for to yive 225
 Is signe that a man is wel yshryve;
 For, if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
 He wiste that a man was repentaunt.
 For many a man so harde is of his herte,
 He may nat wepe, al thogh hym soore smerte; 230
 Therefore, in stede of wepyng and preyeres,
 Men moote yeve silver to the povre freres.
 His typet was ay farsed ful of knyves
 And pynnes, for to yeven yonge wyves.
 And certainly he hadde a murye note, 235
 Wel koude he synge, and pleyen on a rote,
 Of yeddynges he baar outrely the pris.

His nekke whit was as the flour delys;
 Therto he strong was as a champioun,
 He knew the tavernes wel in every toun 240
 And everich hostiler and tappestere
 Bet than a lazar or a beggestere.
 For unto swich a worthy man as he
 Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
 To have with sike lazars aqueyntaunce; 245
 It is nat honeste, it may nat avaunce,
 For to deelen with no swich poraille,
 But al with riche and selleres of vitaille;
 And overal, ther as profit sholde arise,
 Curteis he was, and lowely of servyse. 250
 Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous;
 He was the beste beggere in his hous,
 (And yaf a certeyn ferme for the graunt 252 *b*
 Noon of his brethren cam ther in his haunt;) 252 *c*
 For thogh a wydwe hadde noght a sho,
 So plesaunt was his 'In principio'
 Yet wolde he have a ferthyng er he wente; 255
 His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.
 And rage he koude, as it were right a whelpe;
 In love-dayes ther koude he muchel helpe;
 For there he was nat lyk a cloysterer,
 With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scoler, 260
 But he was lyk a maister or a pope;
 Of double worstede was his semycope,
 That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
 Somwhat he lipped for his wantownesse
 To make his Englissh sweete upon his tonge, 265
 And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde songe,
 Hise eyen twynkled in his heed aryght
 As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.
 This worthy lymytour was cleped Huberd.
 A Marchant was ther, with a forked berd, Marchaunt 270

In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat,
 Upon his heed a Flaundryssh bevere hat,
 His bootes clasped faire and fetisly.
 Hise resons he spak ful solempnely,
 Sowynyng alway thencrees of his wynnyng. 275
 He wolde the see were kept for any thyng
 Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
 Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.
 This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette;
 Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette, 280
 So estatly was he of his governaunce,
 With his bargaynes and with his chevysaunce.
 Forsothe, he was a worthy man with-alle,
 But, sooth to seyn, I noot how men hym calle.

A Clerk ther was of Oxenford also, Clerk of Oxenford 285
 That unto logyk hadde longe ygo.
 As leene was his hors as is a rake,
 And he nas nat right fat, I undertake,
 But looked holwe and therto sobrelly.
 Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy, 290
 For he hadde gotten hym yet no benefice,
 Ne was so worldly for to have office,
 For hym was levere have at his beddes heed
 Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reed,
 Of Aristotle and his philosophie, 295
 Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie.
 But al be that he was a philosophre,
 Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
 But al that he myghte of his freendes hente,
 On bookes and his lernynge he it spente, 300
 And bisily gan for the soules preye
 Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scoleye.
 Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede,
 Noght o word spak he moore than was neede,
 And that was seyde in forme and reverence, 305

And short and quyk, and ful of hy sentence.
 Sownyng in moral vertu was his speche,
 And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

A Sergeant of the Lawe, war and wys, Sergeant of lawe
 That often hadde been at the parvys, 310
 Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
 Discreet he was, and of greet reverence,—
 He semed swich, hise wordes weren so wise.

Justice he was ful often in assise,
 By patente, and by pleyn commissioun. 315

For his science, and for his heigh renoun,
 Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
 So greet a purchasour was nowher noon,
 Al was fee symple to hym in effect,
 His purchasyng myghte nat been infect. 320

Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
 And yet he semed bisier than he was;
 In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle,
 That from the tyme of Kyng William were falle.

Therto he koude endite, and make a thyng, 325
 Ther koude no wight pynche at his writyng.
 And every statut koude he pleyn by rote.

He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote
 Girt with a ^{cynt} ^{ceint} of silk, with barres smale;—
 Of his array telle I no lenger tale. 330

A Frankeleyn was in his compaignye; Frankeleyn
 Whit was his berd as is a dayesye.

Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
 Wel loved he by the morwe a sope in wyn,
 To lyven in delit was evere his wone; 335

For he was Epicurus owene sone,
 That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit
 Was verrailly felicitee parfit.

An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;
 Seint Julian was he in his contree. 340

His breed, his ale, was always after oon,
 A bettre envyned man was nowher noon.
 Withoute bake mete was nevere his hous,
 Of fissh and flessch, and that so plenteuous,
 It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke, 345
 Of alle deyntees that men koude thynke.

After the sondry sesons of the yeer
 So chaunged he his mete and his soper.
 Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe,
 And many a breem and many a luce in stuwe. 350
 Wo was his cook, but if his sauce were
 Poynaunt, and sharp, and redy al his geere.

His table dormant in his halle alway
 Stood redy covered al the longe day.
 At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire; 355
 Ful ofte tyme he was knyght of the shire.
 An anlaas and a gipser al of silk
 Heeng at his girdel, whit as morne milk.
 A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour,
 Was nowher swich a worthy vavasour. 360

An Haberdasshere and a Carpenter,	Haberdasshere
A Webbe, a Dyere, and a Tapycer—	Carpenter
And they were clothed alle in o lyveree	Webbe
Of a solempne and a greet fraternitee.	Dyere
	Tapicer

Ful fressh and newe hir geere apiked was, 365
 Hir knyves were chaped noght with bras,
 But al with silver wrought ful clene and weel,
 Hir girdles and hir pouches everydeel.

Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys
 To sitten in a yeldehalle on a deys. 370

Everich for the wisdom that he kan
 Was shaply for to been an alderman;
 For catel hadde they ynogh, and rente,
 And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente—
 And elles, certeyn, were they to blame! 375

It is ful fair to been ycleped 'ma Dame,'
 And goon to vigilies al bifore,
 And have a mantel roialliche ybore.

A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones,	Cook
To boille the chiknes with the marybones,	380
And poudre-marchant tart, and galyngale.	
Wel koude he knowe a draughte of London ale;	
He koude rooste, and sethe, and broille, and frye,	
Maken mortreux, and wel bake a pye.	
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,	385
That on his shyne a mormal hadde he!	
For blankmanger, that made he with the beste.	

A Shipman was ther, wonynge fer by weste;	Shipman
For aught I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.	
He rood upon a rouncey, as he kouth, e,	390
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.	
A daggere hangynge on a laas hadde he	
Aboute his nekke, under his arm adoun.	
The hoote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun,	
And certainly he was a good felawe.	395
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he ydrawe	
Fro Burdeuxward, whil that the chapman sleep.	
Of nyce conscience took he no keep;	
If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,	
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.	400
But of his craft, to rekene wel his tydes,	
His stremes, and his daungers hym bisides,	
His herberwe and his moone, his lodemenage,	
Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.	
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake,	405
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake;	
He knew alle the havenes as they were	
From Gootlond to the Cape of Fynystere,	
And every cryke in Britaigne and in Spayne.	
His barge ycleped was the Maudelayne.	410

With us ther was a Doctour of Phisik; Doctour of Phisik
 In al this world ne was ther noon hym lik,
 To speke of phisik and of surgerye;
 For he was grounded in astronomye.
 He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel 415
 In houres, by his magyk natureel.
 Wel koude he fortunen the ascendent
 Of hise ymages for his pacient.
 He knew the cause of everich maladye,
 Were it of hoot or coold, or moyste, or drye, 420
 And where they engendred, and of what humour.
 He was a verray parfit praktisour;
 The cause yknowe, and of his harm the roote,
 Anon he yaf the sike man his boote.
 Ful redy hadde he hise apothecaries 425
 To sende him drogges and his letuaries,
 For ech of hem made oother for to wyne,
 Hir frendshipe nas nat newe to bigynne.
 Wel knew he the olde Esculapius,
 And Deyscorides and eek Rufus, 430
 Olde Ypocras, Haly, and Galyen,
 Serapioun, Razis, and Avycen,
 Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn,
 Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.
 Of his diete mesurable was he, 435
 For it was of no superfluitee,
 But of greet norissyng, and digestible.
 His studie was but litel on the Bible.
 In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,
 Lyned with taffata and with sendal— 440
 And yet he was but esy of dispence;
 He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
 For gold in phisik is a cordial,
 Therefore he lovede gold in special.

A good wif was ther, of biside Bathe, The goode Wif of Bathe 445

But she was som-del deef, and that was scathe.
 Of clooth-makyng she hadde swich an haunt,
 She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
 In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon
 That to the offrynge bifore hir sholde goon; 450
 And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,
 That she was out of alle charitee.
 Hir coverchiefs ful fyne weren of *texture* ground,
 I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
 That on a Sonday weren upon hir heed. 455
 Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
 Ful streite yteyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe.
 Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
 She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,
 Housbondes at chirche-dore she hadde fyve 460
 Withouten oother compaignye in youthe—
 But therof nedeth nat to speke as nowthe.
 And thries hadde she been at Jerusalem,
 She hadde passed many a straunge strem,
 At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne, 465
 In Galice at Seint Jame, and at Coloigne,
 She koude muche of wandrynge by the weye.
 Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
 Upon an amblere esily she sat,
 Ywympled wel, and on hir heed an hat 470
 As brood as is a bokeler or a targe,
 A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
 And on hire feet a paire of spores sharpe.
 In felaweship wel koude she laughe and carpe;
 Of remedies of love she knew per-chaunce, 475
 For she koude of that art the olde daunce.
 A good man was ther of religioun,
 And was a povre Persoun of a toun, Persoun of a toun
 But riche he was of hooly thoght and werk.
 He was also a lerned man, a clerk 480
 That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche.

Hise parissheis devoutly wolde he teche,
 Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,
 And in adversitee ful pacient,
 And swich he was ypreved ofte sithes. 485
 Ful looth were hym to cursen for hise tithes,
 But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
 Unto his povre parissheis aboute
 Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce;
 He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce. 490
 Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer asonder,
 But he ne lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
 In siknesse nor in meschief, to visite
 The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,
 Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf. 495
 This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf
 That firste he wroghte, and afterward he taughte—
 Out of the Gospel he tho wordes caughte;
 And this figure he added eek therto,
 That if gold ruste, what shal iren do? 500
 For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
 No wonder is a lewed man to ruste,
 And shame it is, if a prest take keep,
 A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep!
 Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yeve 505
 By his clenness how that his sheep sholde lyve.
 He sette nat his benefice to hyre,
 And leet his sheep encombred in the myre,
 And ran to London, unto Seinte Poules,
 To seken hym a chauntery for soules, 510
 Or with a bretherhed to been withholde,
 But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,
 So that the wolf ne made it nat myscarie.
 He was a shepherde, and noght a mercenarie;
 And though he hooly were and vertuous, 515

485 preved. 497 that he. 509 seint. 510 chauntrie. 512 dwelleth;
 kepeth.

He was to synful man nat despitous,
 Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
 But in his techyng discreet and benygne;
 To drawn folk to hevene by fairnesse,
 By good ensample, this was his bisynesse. 520

But it were any persone obstinat,
 What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,
 Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys.
 A bettre preest, I trowe, that nowher noon ys.
 He waited after no pompe and reverence, 525
 Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
 But Cristes loore, and Hise apostles twelve
 He taughte, but first he folwed it hym-selve.

With hym ther was a Plowman, was his brother, Plowman
 That hadde ylad of dong ful many a fother. 530

A trewe swynker and a good was he,
 Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee.
 God loved he best with al his hoole herte
 At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,
 And thanne his neighebores right as hym-selve; 535
 He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and delve,
 For Cristes sake, for every povre wight
 Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.
 Hise tithes payed he ful faire and wel,
 Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel. 540

In a tabard he rood, upon a mere.

Ther was also a Reve and a Millere, Millere

A Somnour and a Pardoner also,
 A Maunciple, and myself, ther were namo.
 The Millere was a stout carl for the nones, 545
 Ful byg he was of brawn and eek of bones—
 That proved wel, for overal ther he cam
 At wrastlyng he wolde have alwey the ram.
 He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre,
 Ther was no dore that he nolde heve of harre, 550

Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.
 His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
 And therto brood, as though it were a spade.
 Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
 A werte, and thereon stood a toft of heres 555
 Reed as the brustles of a sowes eres;
 Hise nosethirles blake were and wyde.
 A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde.
 His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys,
 He was a janglere and a goliardeys, 560
 And that was moost of synne and harlotries.
 Wel koude he stelen corn, and tollen thries,
 And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.
 A whit cote and a blew hood wered he.
 A baggepipe wel koude he blowe and sowne, 565
 And therewithal he broghte us out of towne.
 A gentil Maunciple was ther of a temple, Maunciple
 Of which achatours myghte take exemple
 For to be wise in byynge of vitaille;
 For wheither that he payde or took by taille, 570
 Algate he wayted so in his achaat
 That he was ay biforn, and in good staat.
 Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace,
 That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
 The wisdom of an heep of lerned men? 575
 Of maistres hadde he mo than thries ten,
 That weren of lawe expert and curious,
 Of whiche ther weren a duszeyne in that hous
 Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond
 Of any lord that is in Engelond, 580
 To maken hym lyve by his propre good,
 In honour dettelees, but if he were wood;
 Or lyve as scarsly as hym list desire,
 And able for to helpen al a shire
 In any caas that myghte falle or happe— 585

And yet this manciple sette hir aller cappe!

The Reve was a splendre colerik man;	Reve
His berd was shave as ny as ever he kan,	
His heer was by his erys ful round yshorn,	
His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.	590
Ful longe were his legges, and ful lene,	
Ylyk a staf, ther was no calf ysene.	
Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne,	
Ther was noon auditour koude on him wynne.	
Wel wiste he, by the droghte, and by the reyn,	595
The yeldyng of his seed and of his greyn.	
His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,	
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrye,	
Was hooly in this reve's governing	
And by his covenant yaf the rekenyng,	600
Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age;	
Ther koude no man brynge hym in arrerage.	
Ther nas baillif, ne hierde, nor oother hyne,	
That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne,	
They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.	605
His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth,	
With grene trees shadwed was his place.	
He koude better than his lord purchase.	
Ful riche he was astored pryvely;	
His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly	610
To yeve and lene hym of his owene good,	
And have a thank, and yet a cote and hood.	
In youthe he hadde lerned a good myster,	
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.	
This reve sat upon a ful good stot,	615
That was al pomely grey, and highte Scot.	
A long surcote of pers upon he hade,	
And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.	
Of Northfolk was this reve, of which I telle,	
Bisyde a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.	620

Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute,
And evere he rood the hyndreste of oure route.

A Somonour was ther with us in that place, Somonour

That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynnes face,
For sawcefleem he was, with eyen narwe. 625

As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe,
With scalled browes blake, and piled berd,
Of his visage children were aferd.

Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymstoon,
Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon, 630

Ne oynement, that wolde clense and byte,
That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white,
Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood; 635

Thanne wolde he speke and crie as he were wood.
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.

A fewe termes hadde he, two or thre,
That he had lerned out of som decree— 640

No wonder is, he herde it al the day,
And eek ye knowen wel how that a jay
Kan clepen 'watte' as wel as kan the Pope.

But who so koude in oother thyng hym grope,
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie; 645

Ay 'questio quid juris' wolde he crie.

He was a gentil harlot and a kynde,
A bettre felawe sholde men noght fynde;

He wolde suffre, for a quart of wyn,
A good felawe to have his concubyn 650

A twelf-monthe, and excuse hym atte fulle—
Ful prively a fynch eek koude he pulle.

And if he foond owher a good felawe,
He wolde techen him to have noon awe,

In swich caas, of the erchedekenes curs, 655

But if a mannes soule were in his purs;
 For in his purs he sholde ypunysshed be,
 'Purs is the erchedekenes helle,' seyde he.
 But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;
 Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede— 660
 For curs wol slee, right as assoillyng savith—
 And also war him of a Significavit.
 In daunger hadde he at his owene gise
 The yonge girles of the diocise,
 And knew hir conseil, and was al hir reed. 665
 A gerland hadde he set upon his heed
 As greet as it were for an ale-stake;
 A bokeleer hadde he maad him of a cake.
 With hym ther rood a gentil Pardoner, *Pardoner*
 Of Rounceivale, his freend and his compeer, 670
 That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.
 Ful loude he soong 'com hider, love, to me.'
 This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun,
 Was nevere tromp^e of half so greet a soun.
 This Pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex, 675
 But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex;
 By ounces henge hise lokkes that he hadde,
 And therwith he hise shuldres overspradde;
 But thynne it lay by colpons oon and oon.
 But hood, for jolitee, wered he noon, 680
 For it was trussed up in his walet.
 Hym thoughte he rood al of the newe jet,
 Dischevele, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
 Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare.
 A vernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe. 685
 His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe
 Bret-ful of pardoun come from Rome al hoot.
 A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot,
 No berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have,
 As smothe it was as it were late shave, 690

I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare.
 But of his craft, fro Berwyk into Ware,
 Ne was ther swich another Pardoner;
 For in his ^{body} male he hadde a pilwe-beer,
 Which that he seyde was Oure Lady veyl; 695

He seyde, he hadde a gobet of the seyl
 That Seinte Peter hadde, whan that he wente
 Upon the see, til Jesu Crist hym hente.
 He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of stones,
 And in a glas he hadde pigges bones; 700

But with thise relikes whan that he fond
 A povre persoun dwellyng up-on-lond,
 Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye
 Than that the person gat in monthes tweye,
 And thus with feyned flaterye and japes 705
 He made the persoun and the peple his apes.
 But trewely to tellen atte laste,

He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste;
 Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
 But alderbest he song an offertorie, 710
 For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe
 He moste preche, and wel affile his tonge;
 To wynne silver, as he ful wel koude,
 Therefore he song the murierly, and loude.

Now have I toold you shortly in a clause 715
 Thestaat, tharray, the nombre, and eek the cause
 Why that assembled was this compaignye
 In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,
 That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
 But now is tyme to yow for to telle 720

How that we baren us that ilke nyght
 Whan we were in that hostelrie alyght,
 And after wol I telle of our viage,
 And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage.
 But first I pray yow, of youre curteisye, 725

That ye narette it nat my vileynye,
 Thogh that I pleylnly speke in this mateere
 To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere,
 Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely.
 For this ye knowen also wel as I, 730
 Who-so shal telle a tale after a man,
 He moot reherce as ny as evere he kan
 Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
 Al speke he never so rudeliche or large;
 Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewē, 735
 Or feyne thyng, or fynde wordes newe.
 He may nat spare, al thogh he were his brother,
 He moot as wel seye o word as another.
 Crist spak hym-self ful brode in Hooly Writ,
 And, wel ye woot, no vileynye is it. 740
 Eek Plato seith, who so kan hym rede,
 The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede.
 Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,
 Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
 Heere in this tale, as that they sholde stonde— 745
 My wit is short, yē may wel understonde.
 Greet chiere made oure hoost us everichon,
 And to the soper sette he us anon.
 He served us with vitaille at the beste;
 Strong was the wyn, and wel to drynke us leste. 750
 A semely man oure Hooste was withalle
 For to been a marchal in an halle.
 A large man he was, with eyen stepe,
 A fairer burgeys was ther noon in Chepe;
 Boold of his speche, and wys, and well ytaught, 755
 And of manhod hym lakkede right naught.
 Eek therto he was right a myrie man;
 And after soper pleyen he bigan,
 And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges,
 Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges, 760

And seyde thus: "Now lordynges, trewely,
 Ye been to me right welcome hertely,
 For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
 I saugh nat this yeer so myrie a compaignye
 Atones in this herberwe, as is now. 765
 Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how—
 And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght
 To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.
 Ye goon to Caunterbury, God yow speede—
 The blisful martir quite yow youre meede— 770
 And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
 Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye,
 For trewely, confort ne myrthe is noon
 To ride by the weye dounb as stoon,
 And therefore wol I maken yow disport, 775
 As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort;
 And if yow liketh alle by oon assent
 For to stonden at my juggement,
 And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
 To-morwe, whan ye riden by the weye, 780
 Now, by my fader soule that is deed,
 But ye be myrie I wol yeve yow myn heed!
 Hoold up youre hond, withouten moore speche."
 Oure conseil was nat longe for to seche—
 Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys— 785
 And graunted hym, withouten moore avys,
 And bad him seye his voidrit, as hym leste.
 "Lordynges," quod he, "now herkneth for the beste,
 But taak it nought, I prey yow, in desdeyn.
 This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn, 790
 That ech of yow, to shorte with oure weye,
 In this viage shal telle tales tweye,
 To Caunterburyward I mene it so,
 And homward he shal tellen othere two,
 Of aventures that whilom han bifalle. 795

And which of yow that bereth hym best of alle—
 That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas
 Tales of best sentence and moost solaas—
 Shal have a soper at oure aller cost,
 Heere in this place, sittynge by this post, 800
 Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
 And for to make yow the moore mury
 I wol my-selven goodly with yow ryde
 Right at myn owene cost, and be youre gyde.
 And who so wole my juggement withseye 805
 Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
 And if ye vouchesauf that it be so,
 Tel me anon, withouten wordes mo,
 And I wol erly shape me therfore.”
 This thyng was graunted, and oure othes swore 810
 With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also
 That he wolde vouchesauf for to do so,
 And that he wolde been oure governour,
 And of our tales juge and reportour,
 And sette a soper at a certeyn pris, 815
 And we wol reuled been at his devys
 In heigh and lough; and thus by oon assent
 We been acorded to his juggement;
 And therupon the wyn was fet anon,
 We dronken, and to reste wente echon 820
 Withouten any lenger tarynge.

Amorwe, whan that day bigan to sprynge,
 Up roos oure Hoost, and was oure aller cok,
 And gadrede us togidre, alle in a flok,
 And forth we riden, a litel moore than paas, 825
 Unto the wateryng of Seint Thomas.
 And there oure Hoost bigan his hors areste,
 And seyde, “Lordynges, herkneth if yow leste,
 Ye woot youre foreward, and I it yow recorde;
 If even-song and morwe-song accorde, 830

Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.
 As evere mote I drynke wyn or ale,
 Whoso be rebel to my juggement
 Shal paye for al that by the wey is spent.
 Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer twynne, 835
 He which that hath the shorteste shal bigynne.
 Sire knyght," quod he, "my mayster and my lord,
 Now draweth cut, for that is myn accord,
 Cometh neer," quod he, "my lady Prioressse,
 And ye, Sir Clerk, lat be your shamefastnesse, 840
 Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every man."
 Anon to drawen every wight bigan,
 And shortly for to tellen as it was,
 Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,
 The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght, 845
 Of which ful blithe and glad was every wyght.
 And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,
 By foreward and by composicioun,—
 As ye han herd, what nedeth wordes mo?
 And whan this goode man saugh that it was so, 850
 As he that wys was and obedient
 To kepe his foreward by his free assent,
 He seyde, "Syn I shal bigynne the game,
 What, welcome be the cut, a Goddes name!
 Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I seye." 855

And with that word we ryden forth oure weye,
 And he bigan with right a myrie cheere
 His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

THE KNYGHTE'S TALE.

*Iamque domos patrias Scithice post aspera gentis prelia
laurigero &c. Thebaïd, xii, 519.*

Heere bigynneth the knyghtes tale.

Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
 Ther was a duc that highte Theseus; 860
 Of Atthenes he was lord and governour,
 And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
 That gretter was ther noon under the sonne.
 Ful many a riche contree hadde he wonne,
 What with his wysdom and his chivalrie; 865
 He conquered al the regne of Femenye,
 That whilom was ycleped Scithia,
 And weddede the queene Ypolita,
 And broghte hir hoom with hym in his contree,
 With muchel glorie and greet solempnytee, 870
 And eek hir yonge suster Emelye.
 And thus with victorie and with melodye
 Lete I this noble duk to Atthenes ryde,
 And al his hoost, in armes hym bisyde.
 And certes, if it nere to long to heere, 875
 I wolde have toold yow fully the manere
 How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
 By Theseus, and by his chivalrye,
 And of the grete bataille for the nones
 Bitwixen Atthenes and Amazones, 880
 And how asseged was Ypolita
 The faire hardy queene of Scithia,
 And of the feste that was at hir weddyng,
 And of the tempest at hir hoom-comyng;
 But al that thyng I moot as now forbere, 885

868 wedded. 871 yonge faire. 876 yow have told.

I have, God woot, a large feeld to ere,
 And wayke been the oxen in my plough,
 The remenant of the tale is long ynough.
 I wol nat letten eek noon of this route,
 Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute, 890
 And lat se now who shal the soper wynne;—
 And ther I lefte, I wol ayeyn bigynne.

This duc of whom I make mencion,
 Whan he was come almoost unto the toun,
 In al his wele and in his mooste pride, 895
 He was war, as he caste his eye aside,
 Where that ther kneled in the hye weye
 A compaignye of ladyes, tweye and tweye,
 Ech after oother, clad in clothes blake;
 But swich a cry and swich a wo they make, 900
 That in this world nys creature lyvyng
 That herde swich another waymentyng!

And of this cry they nolde nevere stenten,
 Til they the reynes of his brydel hent.
 “What folk been ye, that at myn hom-comyng 905
 Perturben so my feste with cryng?”

Quod Theseus, “have ye so greet envye
 Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and crye?
 Or who hath yow mysboden or offended?
 And telleth me if it may been amended, 910
 And why that ye been clothed thus in blak?”
 The eldeste lady of hem alle spak—

Whan she hadde swowned with a deedly cheere,
 That it was routhe for to seen and heere—
 And seyde, “Lord, to whom Fortune hath yeven 915
 Victorie, and as a conqueror to lyven,
 Nat greveth us youre glorie and youre honour,
 But we biseken mercy and socour.

Have mercy on oure wo and oure distresse,
 Som drope of pitee thurgh thy gentillesse 920

Upon us wrecched wommen lat thou falle;
 For certes, lord, ther is noon of us alle
 That she ne hath been a duchesse or a queene.
 Now be we caytyves, as it is wel seene—
 Thanked be Fortune, and hir false wheel, 925
 That noon estat assureth to be weel.
 And certes, lord, to abyden youre presence,
 Heere in the temple of the goddessse Clemence
 We han ben waitynge al this fourtenyght;
 Now help us, lord, sith it is in thy myght! 930
 I wrecche, which that wepe and waille thus,
 Was whilom wyf to kyng Cappaneus,
 That starf at Thebes, cursed be that day!
 And alle we that been in this array
 And maken al this lamentacioun, 935
 We losten alle oure housbondes at that toun,
 Whil that the seege therabout lay.
 And yet now the olde Creon, weylaway!
 That lord is now of Thebes the Citee,
 Fulfild of ire and of iniquitee, 940
 He, for despit and for his tirannye,
 To do the dede bodyes vileynye,
 Of alle oure lordes, whiche that been slawe,
 He hath alle the bodyes on an heep ydrawe,
 And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent, 945
 Neither to been yburyed nor ybrent,
 But maketh houndes ete hem in despit."
 And with that word, withouten moore respit,
 They fillen gruf, and criden pitously,
 "Have on us wrecched wommen som mercy 950
 And lat oure sorwe synken in thyn herte."
 This gentil duk down from his courser sterte
 With herte pitous, whan he herde hem speke;
 Hym thoughte that his herte wolde breke,
 Whan he saugh hem so pitous and so maat, 955

That whilom weren of so greet estaat.
And in his armes he hem alle up hente,
And hem conforteth in ful good entente,
And swoor his ooth, as he was trewe knyght,
He wolde doon so ferforthly his myght 960
Upon the tiraunt Creon hem to wreke,
That all the peple of Grece sholde speke
How Creon was of Theseus yserved,
As he that hadde his deeth ful wel deserved.
And right anoon, withouten moore abood, 965
His baner he desplayeth, and forth rood
To Thebesward, and al his hoost biside,
No neer Atthenes wolde he go ne ride,
Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his wey that nyght he lay— 970
And sente anon Ypolita the queene,
And Emelye, hir yonge suster sheene,
Unto the toun of Atthenes to dwelle—
And forth he rit; ther is namoore to telle.
The rede statue of Mars, with spere and targe, 975
So shyneth, in his white baner large,
That alle the feeldes gliteren up and down,
And by his baner born is his penoun
Of gold ful riche, in which ther was ybete
The Mynotaur which that he slough in Crete. 980
Thus rit this duc, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his hoost of chivalrie the flour,
Til that he cam to Thebes, and alighte
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoughte fighte.
But shortly for to speken of this thyng, 985
With Creon, which that was of Thebes kyng,
He faught, and slough hym manly as a knyght
In pleyn bataille, and putte the folk to flyght,
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rente adoun bothe wall, and sparre, and rafter. 990
And to the ladyes he restored agayn

The bones of hir housbondes that weren slayn,
 To doon obsequies as was tho the gyse.
 But it were al to longe for to devyse
 The grete clamour and the waymentynge 995
 That the ladyes made at the brennynge
 Of the bodies, and the grete honour
 That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
 Dooth to the ladyes, whan they from hym wente;
 But shortly for to telle is myn entente. 1000
 Whan that this worthy duc, this Theseus,
 Hath Creon slayn, and wonne Thebes thus,
 Stille in that feeld he took al nyght his reste
 And dide with al the contree as hym leste.
 To ransake in the taas of bodyes dede, 1005
 Hem for to strepe of harneys and of wede,
 The pilours diden bisynesse and cure,
 After the bataille and disconfiture;
 And so bifel, that in the taas they founde
 Thurgh-girt with many a grevous bloody wounde, 1010
 Two yonge knyghtes liggyng by and by,
 Bothe in oon armes wrought ful richely,
 Of whiche two Arcita highte that oon,
 And that oother knyght highte Palamon.
 Nat fully quyke, ne fully dede they were, 1015
 But by here cote-armures, and by hir gere,
 The heraudes knewe hem best, in special,
 As they that weren of the blood roial
 Of Thebes, and of sustren two yborn.
 Out of the taas the pilours han hem torn, 1020
 And han hem caried softe unto the tente
 Of Theseus, and he ful soone hem sente
 To Atthenes to dwellen in prisoun
 Perpetuelly, he nolde no raunsoun.
 And whan this worthy duc hath thus ydon, 1025
 He took his hoost, and hoom he rood anon,

With laurer crowned, as a conquerour,
 And ther he lyveth in joye and in honour
 Terme of his lyve, what nedeth wordes mo?
 And in a tour, in angwissh and in wo, 1030
 Dwellen this Palamon and eek Arcite
 For evermoore, ther may no gold hem quite.
 This passeth yeer by yeer, and day by day,
 Till it fil ones, in a morwe of May,
 That Emelye, that fairer was to sene 1035
 Than is the lylie upon his stalke grene,
 And fressher than the May with floures newe—
 For with the rose colour stroof hir hewe,
 I noot which was the fairer of hem two—
 Er it were day, as was hir wone to do, 1040
 She was arisen, and al redy dight—
 For May wole have no slogardrie a-nyght;
 The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
 And maketh hym out of his slepe to sterte,
 And seith, 'arys and do thyn observaunce,' 1045
 This maked Emelye have remembraunce
 To doon honour to May, and for to ryse.
 Yclothed was she fressh, for to devyse,
 Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse,
 Bihynde hir bak, a yerde long, I gesse, 1050
 And in the gardyn, at the sonne upriste,
 She walketh up and doun, and as hir liste
 She gadereth floures, party white and rede,
 To make a subtil gerland for hir hede,
 And as an aungel hevenyssshly she soong. 1055
 The grete tour, that was so thikke and stroong,
 Which of the castel was the chief dongeoun,
 Ther as the knyghtes weren in prisoun,
 Of whiche I tolde yow, and tellen shal,
 Was evene joynant to the gardyn wal 1060
 Ther as this Emelye hadde hir pleyynge.

Bright was the sonne, and cleer that morwenynge,
 And Palamoun, this woful prisoner,
 As was his wone, by leve of his gayler,
 Was risen, and romed in a chambre on heigh, 1065
 In which he al the noble citee seigh,
 And eek the gardyn, ful of braunches grene,
 Ther as this fresshe Emelye the shene
 Was in hire walk, and romed up and doun.
 This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun, 1070
 Goth in the chambre romynge to and fro,
 And to hym-self compleynynge of his wo.
 That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, 'allas!'
 And so bifel, by aventure or cas,
 That thurgh a wyndow, thikke of many a barre 1075
 Of iren greet, and square as any sparre,
 He cast his eye upon Emelya,
 And therwithal he bleynte, and cryede "A!"
 As though he stongen were unto the herte.
 And with that cry Arcite anon upsterte 1080
 And seyde, "Cosyn myn, what eyleth thee,
 That art so pale and deedly on to see?
 Why cridestow? who hath thee doon offence?
 For Goddess love, taak al in pacience
 Oure prisoun, for it may noon oother be; 1085
 Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.
 Som wikke aspect or disposicioun
 Of Saturne by sum constellacioun
 Hath yeven us this, al though we hadde it sworn.
 So stood the hevene, whan that we were born. 1090
 We moste endure it, this the short and playn."
 This Palamon answerde and seyde agayn,
 "Cosyn, for sothe, of this opinioun
 Thow hast a veyn ymaginacioun.
 This prison caused me nat for to crye, 1095
 But I was hurt right now thurgh-out myn eye

Into myn herte, that wol my bane be.
 The fairnesse of that lady, that I see
 Yond in the gardyn romen to and fro,
 Is cause of al my cryng and my wo. 1100
 I noot wher she be womman or goddesse,
 But Venus is it, soothly as I gesse."
 And therwithal, on knees doun he fil,
 And seyde, "Venus, if it be thy wil,
 Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure 1105
 Bifore me, sorweful wrecche creature,
 Out of this prisoun helpe that we may scapen!
 And if so be my destynnee be shapen
 By eterne word to dyen in prisoun,
 Of oure lynage have som compassioun, 1110
 That is so lowe ybrought by tirannye."

And with that word Arcite gan espye
 Wher-as this lady romed to and fro,
 And with that sighte hir beautee hurte hym so,
 That if that Palamon was wounded sore, 1115
 Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or moore.
 And with a sigh he seyde pitously,
 "The fresshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
 Of hir, that rometh in the yonder place!
 And but I have hir mercy and hir grace 1120
 That I may seen hir atte leeste weye,
 I nam but deed, ther is namoore to seye."
 This Palamon, whan he tho wordes herde,
 Dispitously he looked and answerde,
 "Wheither seistow this in ernest or in pley?" 1125
 "Nay," quod Arcite, "in ernest by my fey,
 God helpe me so, me list ful yvele pleye."
 This Palamon gan knytte his browes tweye;
 "It nere," quod he, "to thee no greet honour
 For to be fals, ne for to be traitour 1130
 To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother,

Ysworn ful depe, and ech of us til oother,
 That nevere for to dyen in the peyne,
 Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne,
 Neither of us in love to hyndre other, 1135
 Ne in noon oother cas, my leeve brother,
 But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me
 In every cas, as I shal forthren thee.

This was thyn ooth, and myn also certeyn,
 I woot right wel thou darst it nat withseyn. 1140

Thus artow of my conseil, out of doute;
 And now thou woldest falsly been aboute
 To love my lady, whom I love and serve
 And evere shal, til that myn herte sterve.
 Nay, certes, false Arcite, thow shalt nat so! 1145

I loved hir first, and tolde thee my wo
 As to my conseil, and to my brother sworn,
 To forthre me as I have toold biforn,
 For which thou art ybounden as a knyght
 To helpen me, if it lay in thy myght, 1150
 Or elles artow fals, I dar wel seyn."

This Arcite ful proudly spak ageyn,
 "Thow shalt," quod he, "be rather fals than I.
 But thou art fals, I telle thee outrely,
 For paramour I loved hir first er thow. 1155

What, wiltow seyn thou wistest nat yet now
 Wheither she be a womman or goddesse?
 Thyn is affeccioun of hoolynesse,
 And myn is love as to a creature;
 For which I tolde thee myn aventure 1160

As to my cosyn and my brother sworn.
 I pose, that thow lovedest hir biforn;
 Wostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe
 That 'who shal yeve a loveve any lawe?'
 Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan, 1165
 Than may be yeve of any erthely man.

And therefore positif lawe and swich decree
 Is broken al day for love in ech degree.
 A man moot nedes love, maugree his heed,
 He may nat fleen it, thogh he sholde be deed, 1170
 Al be she mayde, or wydwe, or elles wyf.
 And eek it is nat likly, al thy lyf,
 To stonden in hir grace, namoore shal I,
 For wel thou woost thyselven, verrailly,
 That thou and I be dampned to prisoun 1175
 Perpetuelly, us gayneth no raunsoun.
 We stryven as dide the houndes for the boon,
 They foughte al day, and yet hir part was noon.
 Ther cam a kyte, whil they weren so wrothe,
 And baar away the boon bitwixe hem bothe. 1180
 And therefore at the kynges court, my brother,
 Ech man for hymself, ther is noon oother.
 Love if thee list, for I love, and ay shal;
 And soothly, leewe brother, this is al.
 Heere in this prisoun moote we endure, 1185
 And everich of us take his aventure."

Greet was the strif and long bitwix hem tweye,
 If that I hadde leyser for to seye—
 But to theeffect; it happed on a day,
 To telle it yow as shortly as I may, 1190
 A worthy duc, that highte Perotheus,
 That felawe was unto duc Theseus
 Syn thilke day that they were children lite,
 Was come to Atthenes his felawe to visite,
 And for to pleye as he was wont to do— 1195
 For in this world he loved no man so,
 And he loved hym als tendrely agayn.
 So wel they lovede, as olde bookes sayn,
 That whan that oon was deed, soothly to telle,
 His felawe wente and soughte hym down in helle. 1200
 But of that storie list me nat to write;

Duc Perotheus loved wel Arcite,
 And hadde hym knowe at Thebes yeer by yeer,
 And finally, at requeste and preyere
 Of Perotheus, withouten any raunsoun 1205

Duc Theseus hym leet out of prisoun
 Frely to goon, wher that hym liste overal,
 In swich a gyse as I you tellen shal.

This was the forward, pleyedly for tendite,
 Bitwixen Theseus and hym Arcite, 1210

That if so were that Arcite were yfounded
 Evere in his lif, by day or nyght or stounde,
 In any contree of this Theseus,

And he were caught, it was acorded thus,
 That with a swerd he sholde lese his heed; 1215

Ther nas noon oother remedie ne reed,
 But taketh his leve and homward he him spedde;
 Lat hym be war, his nekke lith to wedde!

How greet a sorwe suffreth now Arcite!
 The deeth he feeleth thurgh his herte smyte, 1220

He wepeth, wayleth, crieth pitously,
 To sleen hymself he waiteth prively.

He seyde, "Allas, that day that he was born!
 Now is my prisoun worse than biforn;
 Now is me shape eternally to dwelle 1225

Nat in purgatorie but in helle.

Allas, that evere knew I Perotheus!

For elles hadde I dwelled with Theseus,
 Yfetered in his prisoun evermo;
 Thanne hadde I been in blisse, and nat in wo. 1230

Oonly the sighte of hire whom that I serve,
 Though that I nevere hir grace may deserve,
 Wolde han suffised right ynough for me.

O deere cosyn Palamon," quod he,
 "Thyn is the victorie of this aventure. 1235

Ful blisfully in prison maistow dure.—

In prisoun? certes, nay, but in Paradys!
 Wel hath Fortune yturned thee the dys,
 That hast the sighte of hir, and I thabsence;
 For possible is, syn thou hast hir presence, 1240
 And art a knyght, a worthy and an able,
 That by som cas, syn Fortune is chaungeable,
 Thow maist to thy desir som tyme atteyne.
 But I, that am exiled and bareyne
 Of alle grace, and in so greet dispeir 1245
 That ther nys erthe, water, fir, ne eir,
 Ne creature, that of hem maked is,
 That may me heelp, or doon confort in this,
 Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope and distresse,
 Farwel, my lif, my lust, and my gladnesse! 1250
 Allas, why pleynen folk so in commune
 On purveyaunce of God or of Fortune,
 That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse
 Wel bettre than they kan hem-self devyse?
 Som man desireth for to han richesse, 1255
 That cause is of his moerdre or greet siknesse.
 And som man wolde out of his prisoun fayn,
 That in his hous is of his meynee slayn.
 Infinite harmes been in this mateere,
 We witen nat what thing we preyen here. 1260
 We faren as he that dronke is as a mous;
 A dronke man woot wel he hath an hous,
 But he noot which the righte wey is thider,
 And to a dronke man the wey is slider.
 And certes, in this world so faren we; 1265
 We seken faste after felicitee,
 But we goon wrong ful often trewely.
 Thus may we seyen alle, and namely I,
 That wende and hadde a greet opinioun
 That if I myghte escapen from prisoun, 1270
 Thanne hadde I been in joye and perfit heele,

Ther now I am exiled fro my wele.

Syn that I may nat seen you, Emelye,
I nam but deed, ther nys no remedye."

Upon that oother syde, Palamon, 1275

Whan that he wiste Arcite was agon,
Swich sorwe he maketh, that the grete tour
Resouneth of his youlyng and clamour.

The pure fettres on his shynes grete
Weren of his bittre salte teeres wete. 1280

"Allas," quod he, "Arcite, cosyn myn!
Of al oure strif, God woot, the fruyt is thyn.

Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy large,
And of my wo thow yevest litel charge.

Thou mayst, syn thou hast wysdom and manhede, 1285

Assemblen alle the folk of oure kynrede,

And make a werre so sharp on this citee,

That by som aventure, or som tretee,

Thow mayst have hir to lady and to wyf,

For whom that I moste nedes lese my lyf. 1290

For as by wey of possibilittee,

Sith thou art at thy large of prisoun free,

And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage

Moore than is myn, that sterve here in a cage.

For I moot wepe and wayle, whil I lyve, 1295

With al the wo that prison may me yeve,

And eek with peyne that love me yeveth also,

That doubleth al my torment and my wo."

Therwith the fyr of jalousie up-sterste

Withinne his brest, and hente him by the herte 1300

So woodly, that he lyk was to biholde

The boxtree, or the asshen dede and colde.

Thanne seyde he, "O cruel goddes, that governe

This world with byndyng of youre word eterne,

And writen in the table of atthamaunt 1305

Youre parlement and youre eterne graunt,

What is mankynde moore unto you holde
 Than is the sheep that rouketh in the folde?
 For slayn is man right as another beeste,
 And dwelleth eek in prison and arreeste, 1310
 And hath siknesse, and greet adversitee,
 And ofte tymes giltelees, pardee!
 What governance is in this prescience
 That giltelees tormenteth innocence?
 And yet encresseth this al my penaunce, 1315
 That man is bounden to his observaunce,
 For Goddes sake, to letten of his wille,
 Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfille.
 And whan a beest is deed, he hath no peyne,
 But man after his deeth moot wepe and pleyne, 1320
 Though in this world he have care and wo.
 Withouten doute it may stonden so.
 The answeere of this lete I to dyvynys,
 But well I woot, that in this world greet pyne ys.
 Allas, I se a serpent or a theef, 1325
 That many a trewe man hath doon mescheef,
 Goon at his large, and where hym list may turne!
 But I moot been in prisoun thurgh Saturne,
 And eek thurgh Juno, jalous and eek wood,
 That hath destroyed wel ny al the blood 1330
 Of Thebes, with hise waste walles wyde.
 And Venus sleeth me on that oother syde
 For jalousie and fere of hym Arcite."

Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite,
 And lete hym in his prisoun stille dwelle, 1335
 And of Arcita forth I wol yow telle.
 The somer passeth, and the nyghtes longe
 Encressen double wise the peynes stronge
 Bothe of the love-re and the prisoner;
 I noot which hath the wofuller mester. 1340

1309 beest. 1310 arreest. 1312, 1314, giltlees. 1320 man moot.
 1337 somer sonne.

For shortly for to seyn, this Palamoun
 Perpetuelly is dampned to prisoun
 In cheynes and in fettres to been deed,
 And Arcite is exiled upon his heed
 For evere mo as out of that contree, 1345
 Ne nevere mo he shal his lady see.

Yow loveres axe I now this questioun,
 Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun?
 That oon may seen his lady day by day,
 But in prison he moot dwelle alway; 1350
 That oother wher hym list may ride or go,
 But seen his lady shal he nevere mo.
 Now demeth as yow liste ye that kan,
 For I wol telle forth, as I bigan.

Explicit prima pars.

Sequitur pars secunda.

Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen was, 1355
 Ful ofte a day he swelte and seyde 'allas,'
 For seen his lady shal he nevere mo;
 And shortly to concluden al his wo,
 So muche sorwe hadde nevere creature,
 That is, or shal, whil that the world may dure. 1360
 His sleep, his mete, his drynke is hym biraft,
 That lene he wex and drye as is a shaft.
 Hise eyen holwe and grisly to biholde,
 His hewe falow and pale as asshen colde;
 And solitarie he was and evere allone 1365
 And waillynge al the nyght, makynge his mone.
 And if he herde song or instrument,
 Thanne wolde he wepe, he myghte nat be stent.
 So feble eek were hise spiritz, and so lowe,
 And chaunged so, that no man koude knowe 1370

His speche nor his voys, though men it herde.
 And in his geere for al the world he ferde
 Nat oonly lik the loveris maladye
 Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye
 Engendred of humour malencolik 1375
 Biforen in his celle fantastik,
 And shortly turned was al up-so-doun
 Bothe habit and eek disposicioun
 Of hym, this woful love-re daun Arcite.
 What sholde I al day of his wo endite? 1380
 Whan he endured hadde a yeer or two
 This crueel torment, and this peyne and woo,
 At Thebes in his contree, as I seyde,
 Upon a nyght in sleep as he hym leyde,
 Hym thoughte how that the wynged god Mercurie 1385
 Biforn hym stood, and bad hym to be murie.
 His slepy yerde in hond he bar uprighte,
 An hat he werede upon hise heris brighte.
 Arrayed was this god, as he took keep,
 As he was whan that Argus took his sleep; 1390
 And seyde hym thus, "To Atthenes shaltou wende,
 Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende."
 And with that word Arcite wook and sterte.
 "Now trewely, how soore that me smerte,"
 Quod he, "to Atthenes right now wol I fare, 1395
 Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare
 To se my lady that I love and serve,
 In hir presence I recche nat to sterve."
 And with that word he caughte a greet mirour,
 And saugh that chaunged was al his colour, 1400
 And saugh his visage al in another kynde.
 And right anon it ran hym in his mynde,
 That sith his face was so disfigured
 Of maladye, the which he hadde endured,
 He myghte wel, if that he bar hym lowe, 1405

Lyve in Atthenes, everemoore unknowe,
 And seen his lady wel ny day by day.
 And right anon he chaunged his array,
 And cladde hym as a povre laborer,
 And al allone, save oonly a squier 1410
 That knew his privetee and al his cas,
 Which was disgised povrely, as he was,
 To Atthenes is he goon, the nexte way.
 And to the court he wente, upon a day,
 And at the gate he profreth his servyse, 1415
 To drugge and drawe, what so men wol devyse.
 And shortly of this matere for to seyn,
 He fil in office with a chamberleyn,
 The which that dwellynge was with Emelye,
 For he was wys and koude soone espye 1420
 Of every servant which that serveth here.
 Wel koude he hewen wode, and water bere,
 For he was yong and myghty for the nones,
 And therto he was strong and big of bones
 To doon that any wight kan hym devyse. 1425
 A yeer or two he was in this servyse
 Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte;
 And Philostrate he seyde that he highte.
 But half so wel biloved a man as he
 Ne was ther nevere in court, of his degree; 1430
 He was so gentil of condicioun
 That thurghout al the court was his renoun.
 They seyden, that it were a charitee,
 That Theseus wolde enhaunsen his degree,
 And putten hym in worshipful servyse 1435
 Ther as he myghte his vertu exercise.
 And thus withinne a while his name is spronge
 Bothe of hise dedes and his goode tonge,
 That Theseus hath taken hym so neer
 That of his chambre he made hym a Squier, 1440

And gaf hym gold to mayntene his degree.
 And eek men broghte hym out of his contree
 From yeer to yeer, ful pryvely, his rente.
 But honestly and slyly he it spente,
 That no man wondred how that he it hadde. 1445
 And thre yeer in this wise his lif he ladde,
 And bar hym so in pees, and eek in werre,
 Ther was no man that Theseus hath derre.
 And in this blisse lete I now Arcite,
 And speke I wole of Palamon a lite. 1450

In derknesse and horrible and strong prisoun
 Thise seven yeer hath seten Palamoun,
 Forpynd, what for wo and for distresse.
 Who feeleth double soor and hevynesse
 But Palamon, that love destreyneth so, 1455
 That wood out of his wit he goth for wo?
 And eek therto he is a prisoner,
 Perpetuelly, noght oonly for a yer.
 Who koude ryme in Englyssh proprely
 His martirdom? Forsothe it am nat I, 1460
 Therefore I passe as lightly as I may.
 It fel that in the seventhe yer, in May,
 The thridde nyght, as olde bookes seyn,
 That al this storie tellen moore pleyn,
 Were it by aventure or destynnee— 1465
 As, whan a thyng is shapen, it shal be—
 That soone after the mydnyght, Palamoun
 By helpyng of a freend, brak his prisoun
 And fleeth the citee faste as he may go;
 For he hade yeve his gayler drynke so 1470
 Of a clarree maad of a certeyn wyn,
 With nercotikes and opie of Thebes fyn,
 That al that nyght, thogh that men wolde him shake,
 The gayler sleep, he myghte nat awake.
 And thus he fleeth as faste as evere he may; 1475

The nyght was short and faste by the day,
 That nedes-cost he moot hymselfen hyde;
 And til a grove, faste ther bisyde,
 With dredeful foot thanne stalketh Palamoun. 1480
 For shortly this was his opinioun,
 That in that grove he wolde hym hyde al day,
 And in the nyght thanne wolde he take his way
 To Thebesward, his freendes for to preye
 On Theseus to helpe hym to werreye;
 And shortly, outhur he wolde lese his lif, 1485
 Or wynnen Emelye unto his wyf;
 This is theffect and his entente pleyn.
 Now wol I turne to Arcite ageyn,
 That litel wiste how ny that was his care
 Til that Fortune had broght him in the snare. 1490
 The bisy larke, messenger of day,
 Salueth in hir song the morwe gray,
 And firy Phebus riseth up so brighte
 That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,
 And with hise stremes dryeth in the greves 1495
 The silver dropes hangynge on the leues;
 And Arcita, that is in the court roial
 With Theseus, his squier principal,
 Is risen, and looketh on the myrie day.
 And for to doon his observaunce to May, 1500
 Remembrynge on the poynt of his desir
 He on a courser startlynge as the fir
 Is riden into the feeldes, hym to pleye,
 Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye.
 And to the grove of which that I yow tolde 1505
 By aventure his wey he gan to holde,
 To maken hym a gerland of the greves,
 Were it of wodebynde or hawethorn-leves.
 And loude he song ayeyn the sonne shene,
 "May, with alle thy floures and thy grene, 1510
 Welcome be thou, faire fresshe May,

In hope that I som grene gete may."

And from his courser, with a lusty herte,

Into a grove ful hastily he sterte,

And in a path he rometh up and down

1515

Ther as by aventure this Palamoun

Was in a bussh, that no man myghte hym se;

For soore afered of his deeth was he.

No thyng ne knew he that it was Arcite,

God woot, he wolde have trowed it ful lite!

1520

But sooth is seyde, gon sithen many yeres,

That feeld hath eyen and the wode hath eres.

It is ful fair a man to bere hym evene,

For al day meeteth men at unset stevene.

Ful litel woot Arcite of his felawe,

1525

That was so ny to herkennen al his sawe,

For in the bussh he sitteth now ful stille.

Whan that Arcite hadde romed al his fille

And songen al the roundel lustily,

Into a studie he fil al sodeynly,

1530

As doon thise loveres in hir queynte geres,

Now in the crope, now down in the breres,

Now up, now down, as boket in a welle.

Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,

Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,

1535

Right so kan geery Venus overcaste

The hertes of hir folk; right as hir day

Is gereful, right so chaungeth she array.

Selde is the Friday al the wowke ylike.

Whan that Arcite had songe, he gan to sike,

1540

And sette hym down withouten any moore;

"Allas," quod he, "that day that I was bore!

How longe, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee

Woltow werreyen Thebes the Citee?

Allas, ybrought is to confusioun

1545

The blood roial of Cadme and Amphioun!

Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man
 That Thebes bulte, or first the toun bigan,
 And of the citee first was crowned kyng,
 Of his lynage am I, and his ofspryng, 1550
 By verray ligne, as of the stok roial,
 And now I am so caytyf and so thral
 That he that is my mortal enemy
 I serve hym as his squier povrely.
 And yet dooth Juno me wel moore shame, 1555
 For I dar noght biknowe myn owene name,
 But theras I was wont to highte Arcite,
 Now highte I Philostrate, noght worth a myte.
 Allas, thou felle Mars! allas, Juno!
 Thus hath youre ire oure kynrede al fordo, 1560
 Save oonly me, and wrecched Palamoun
 That Theseus martireth in prisoun.
 And over al this, to sleen me outrely,
 Love hath his fryr dart so brennyngly
 Ystiked thurgh my trewe careful herte, 1565
 That shapen was my deeth erst than my sherte.
 Ye sleen me with youre eyen, Emelye,
 Ye been the cause wherfore that I dye.
 Of al the remenant of myn oother care
 Ne sette I nat the montance of a tare, 1570
 So that I koude doon aught to youre plesaunce."
 And with that word he fil down in a traunce
 A longe tyme, and after he upsterte.
 This Palamoun, that thoughte that thurgh his herte
 He felte a coold swerd sodeynliche glyde, 1575
 For ire he quook, no lenger wolde he byde.
 And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,
 As he were wood, with face deed and pale,
 He stirte hym up out of the buskes thikke,
 And seide, "Arcite, false traytour wikke! 1580
 Now artow hent that lovest my lady so,
 For whom that I have al this peyne and wo,

And art my blood, and to my conseil sworn,
As I ful ofte have seyde thee heer-biforn,
And hast byjaped heere duc Theseus, 1585
And falsly chaunged hast thy name thus.
I wol be deed, or elles thou shalt dye;
Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,
But I wol love hire oonly, and namo,
For I am Palamon, thy mortal foo! 1590
And though that I no wepene have in this place,
But out of prison am avert by grace,
I drede noght that outhur thou shalt dye,
Or thou ne shalt nat loven Emelye.
Chees which thou wolt, for thou shalt nat avertere!" 1595
This Arcite, with ful despitous herte,
Whan he hym knew, and hadde his tale herd,
As fiers as leoun pulled out his swerd,
And seyde thus: "By God that sit above,
Nere it that thou art sik and wood for love, 1600
And eek that thou no wepne hast in this place,
Thou sholdest nevere out of this grove pace,
That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond.
For I defy the seurete and the bond
Which that thou seist that I have maad to thee. 1605
What, verray fool, thyng wel that love is free!
And I wol love hir, maugree al thy myght!
But for as muche thou art a worthy knyght,
And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille,
Have heer my trouthe; tomorwe I wol nat faille 1610
Withoute wityng of any oother wight
That heere I wol be founden as a knyght,
And bryngen harneys right ynough for thee,
And chese the beste, and leve the worste for me.
And mete and drynke this nyght wol I brynge 1615
Ynough for thee, and clothes for thy beddyng;
And if so be that thou my lady wyne,
And sle me in this wode ther I am inne,

Thow mayst wel have thy lady as for me."
 This Palamon answerde, "I graunte it thee." 1620
 And thus they been departed til amorwe,
 Whan ech of hem had leyd his feith to borwe.
 O Cupide, out of alle charitee!
 O regne, that wolt no felawe have with thee!
 Ful sooth is seyde that love ne lordshipe 1625
 Wol noght, hir thanks, have no felaweshipe.
 Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamoun:
 Arcite is riden anon unto the toun,
 And on the morwe, er it were dayes light,
 Ful prively two harneys hath he dight, 1630
 Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
 The bataille in the feeld bitwix hem tweyne.
 And on his hors, allone as he was born,
 He carieth al this harneys hym biforn,
 And in the grove, at tyme and place yset, 1635
 This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.
 Tho chaungen gan the colour in hir face
 Right as the hunters in the regne of Trace,
 That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,
 Whan hunted is the leoun and the bere, 1640
 And hereth hym come russhyng in the greves,
 And breketh bothe bowes and the leves,
 And thynketh, "Heere cometh my mortal enemy,
 Withoute faille he moot be deed or I,
 For outhur I moot sleen hym at the gappe, 1645
 Or he moot sleen me, if that me myshappe"—
 So ferden they in chaungyng of hir hewe,
 As fer as everich of hem outhur knewe.
 Ther nas no good day ne no saluyng,
 But streight withouten word or rehersyng 1650
 Everich of hem heelp for to armen outhur,
 As freendly as he were his owene brother.
 And after that with sharpe speres stronge

They foynen ech at oother wonder longe.
 Thou myghtest wene that this Palamoun 1655
 In his fightyng were a wood leoun,
 And as a crueel tigre was Arcite.
 As wilde bores gonne they to smyte,
 That frothen white as foom for ire wood.
 Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood; 1660
 And in this wise I lete hem fightyng dwelle,
 And forth I wole of Theseus yow telle.

The destinee, ministre general,
 That executeth in the world overal
 The purveiaunce that God hath seyn biforn, 1665
 So strong it is, that though the world had sworn
 The contrarie of a thyng, by yē or nay,
 Yet somtyme it shal fallen on a day
 That falleth nat eft withinne a thousand yeere.
 For certainly, oure appetites heere, 1670
 Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
 Al is this reuled by the sighte above.
 This mene I now by myghty Theseus,
 That for to hunten is so desirus
 And namely at the grete hert in May, 1675
 That in his bed ther daweth hym no day
 That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde
 With hunte and horn, and houndes hym bisyde.
 For in his huntynge hath he swich delit
 That it is al his joye and appetit 1680
 To been hymself the grete hertes bane—
 For after Mars he serveth now Dyane.

Cleer was the day, as I have toold er this,
 And Theseus, with alle joye and blis,
 With his Ypolita, the faire quene, 1685
 And Emelye, clothed al in grene,
 On huntynge be they riden roially,
 And to the grove, that stood ful faste by,
 In which ther was an hert, as men hym tolde,

Duc Theseus the streighte wey hath holde, 1690
 And to the launde he rideth hym ful right,
 For thider was the hert wont have his flight,
 And over a brook, and so forth in his weye.
 This duc wol han a cours at hym, or tweye,
 With houndes swiche as that hym list comaunde. 1695
 And whan this duc was come unto the launde,
 Under the sonne he looketh, and anon
 He was war of Arcite and Palamon,
 That foughten breme, as it were bores two;
 The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro 1700
 So hidously, that with the leeste strook
 It semed as it wolde felle an ook;
 But what they were, nothyng he ne woot.
 This duc his courser with his spores smoot,
 And at a stert he was bitwix hem two, 1705
 And pulled out a swerd, and cride, "Hoo!
 Namooore, up peyne of lesyng of youre heed!
 By myghty Mars, he shal anon be deed
 That smyteth any strook, that I may seen!
 But telleth me what myster men ye been, 1710
 That been so hardy for to fighten heere
 Withouten juge or oother officere,
 As it were in a lystes roially?"
 This Palamon answerde hastily,
 And seyde, "Sire, what nedeth wordes mo? 1715
 We have the deeth disserved, bothe two.
 Two woful wrecches been we, two caytyves,
 That been encombred of oure owene lyves,
 And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,
 Ne yeve us neither mercy ne refuge, 1720
 But sle me first for seinte charitee;
 But sle my felawe eek as wel as me—
 Or sle hym first, for, though thou knowest it lite,
 This is thy mortal foo, this is Arcite,

That fro thy lond is banysshed on his heed, 1725
For which he hath deserved to be deed.
For this is he, that cam unto thy gate,
And seyde that he highte Philostrate.
Thus hath he japed thee ful many a yer,
And thou hast maked hym thy chief Squier, 1730
And this is he that loveth Emelye.
For sith the day is come that I shal dye,
I make pleynly my confessioun
That I am thilke woful Palamoun,
That hath thy prisoun broken wikkedly. 1735
I am thy mortal foo, and it am I
That loveth so hote Emelye the brighte,
That I wol dye present in hir sighte;
Wherfore I axe deeth and my juwise—
But sle my felawe in the same wise 1740
For bothe han we deserved to be slayn.”
This worthy duc answerde anon agayn,
And seyde, “This is a short conclusioun,
Youre owene mouth, by your confessioun,
Hath dampned yow, and I wol it recorde. 1745
It nedeth noght to pyne yow with the corde,
Ye shal be deed, by myghty Mars the rede!”
The queene anon, for verray wommanhede,
Gan for to wepe, and so dide Emelye,
And alle the ladyes in the compaignye. 1750
Greet pitee was it, as it thoughte hem alle,
That evere swich a chaunce sholde falle.
For gentilmen they were of greet estaat,
And no thyng but for love was this debaat,
And saugh hir blody woundes wyde and soore, 1755
And alle crieden, bothe lasse and moore,
“Have mercy, lord, upon us women alle!”
And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,
And wolde have kist his feet ther as he stood;
Til at the laste aslaked was his mood, 1760

For pitee renneth soone in gentil herte.
 And though he first for ire quook and sterte,
 He hath considered shortly in a clause
 The trespass of hem bothe, and eek the cause,
 And although that his ire hir gilt accused, 1765
 Yet in his resoun he hem bothe excused.
 As thus, he thoghte wel, that every man
 Wol helpe hym-self in love, if that he kan,
 And eek delivere hym-self out of prisoun;
 And eek his herte haddé compassioun 1770
 Of wommen, for they wepen evere in oon.
 And in his gentil herte he thoughte anon,
 And softe unto hym-self he seyde, "Fy
 Upon a lord that wol have no mercy,
 But been a leoun, bothe in word and dede, 1775
 To hem that been in repentaunce and drede,
 As wel as to a proud despitous man,
 That wol maynteyne that he first bigan!
 That lord hath litel of discrecioun
 That in swich cas kan no divisoun, 1780
 But weyeth pride and humblesse after oon."
 And shortly, whan his ire is thus agoon,
 He gan to looken up with eyen lighte,
 And spak thise same wordes al on highte:
 "The God of love, A! benedicite! 1785
 How myghty and how greet a lord is he!
 Ayeyns his myght ther gayneth none obstacles,
 He may be cleped a god for hise myracles,
 For he kan maken at his owene gyse
 Of everich herte as that hym list divyse. 1790
 Lo heere, this Arcite and this Palamoun
 That quitly weren out of my prisoun,
 And myghte han lyved in Thebes roially,
 And witen I am hir mortal enemy,
 And that hir deth lith in my myght also; 1795

And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,
 Ybrought hem hyder bothe for to dye!
 Now looketh, is nat that an heigh folye?
 Who may been a fole, but if he love?
 Bihoold, for Goddes sake that sit above, 1800
 Se how they blede! Be they noght wel arrayed?
 Thus hath hir lord, the God of Love, ypayed
 Hir wages and hir fees for hir servyse!
 And yet they wenen for to been ful wyse,
 That serven love, for aught that may bifalle! 1805
 But this is yet the beste game of alle,
 That she, for whom they han this jolitee,
 Kan hem therfore as muche thank, as me!
 She woot namoore of al this hoote fare,
 By God, than woot a cokkow or an hare! 1810
 But all moot ben assayed, hoot and coold;
 A man moot ben a fool, or yong or oold;
 I woot it by myself ful yore agon,
 For in my tyme a servant was I oon.
 And therfore, syn I knowe of loves payne, 1815
 And woot how soore it kan a man distreyne,
 As he that hath ben caught ofte in his laas,
 I yow foryeve al hoolly this trespaas,
 At requeste of the queene that kneleth heere,
 And eek of Emelye, my suster deere. 1820
 And ye shul bothe anon unto me swere,
 That nevere mo ye shal my contree dere,
 Ne make werre upon me, nyght ne day,
 But been my freendes in al that ye may,
 I yow foryeve this trespass, every deel." 1825
 And they hym sworn his axyng, faire and weel,
 And hym of lordship and of mercy preyde,
 And he hem graunteth grace, and thus he seyde:
 "To speke of roial lynage and richesse,
 Though that she were a queene or a princesse, 1830

Ech of you bothe is worthy doutelees
 To wedden whan tyme is, but nathelees
 I speke as for my suster Emelye,
 For whom ye have this strif and jalousye:
 Ye woot yourself, she may nat wedden two 1835
 Atones, though ye fighten everemo!
 That oon of you, al be hym looth or lief,
 He moot go pipen in an yvy-leef—
 This is to seyn, she may nat now han bothe,
 Al be ye never so jalouse, ne so wrothe. 1840
 And forthy, I yow putte in this degree;
 That ech of yow shal have his destyne
 As hym is shape, and herkneth in what wyse;
 Lo, heere your ende of that I shal devyse.
 My wyl is this, for plat conclusioun, 1845
 Withouten any repplicacioun,
 If that you liketh, take it for the beste,
 That everich of you shal goon where hym leste,
 Frely, withouten raunson, or daunger,
 And this day fifty wykes fer ne ner, 1850
 Everich of you shal brynge an hundred knyghtes
 Armed for lystes up at alle rightes,
 Al redy to darreyne hire by bataille.
 And this bihote I yow withouten faille,
 Upon my trouthe, and as I am a knyght, 1855
 That wheither of yow bothe that hath myght,
 This is to seyn, that wheither he, or thow,
 May with his hundred, as I spak of now,
 Sleen his contrarie, or out of lystes dryve,
 Thanne shal I yeve Emelya to wyve, 1860
 To whom that Fortune yeveth so fair a grace.
 Tho lystes shal I maken in this place,
 And God so wisly on my soule rewe,
 As I shal evene juge been, and trewe.
 Ye shul noon oother ende with me maken, 1865

That oon of yow ne shal be deed or taken.
 And if yow thynketh this is weel ysaid,
 Seyeth youre avys and holdeth you apayd;
 This is youre ende and youre conclusioun."
 Who looketh lightly now but Palamoun? 1870
 Who spryngeth up for joye but Arcite?
 Who kouthe tellen, or who kouthe endite
 The joye that is maked in the place,
 Whan Theseus hath doon so fair a grace?
 But doun on knees wente every maner wight, 1875
 And thonken hym with al hir herte and myght,
 And namely the Thebans, often sithe.
 And thus with good hope and with herte blithe
 They taken hir leve, and homward gonne they ride
 To Thebes with hise olde walles wyde. 1880

Explicit secunda pars

Sequitur pars tercia

I trowe men wolde deme it necligence,
 If I foryete to tellen the dispence
 Of Theseus, that gooth so bisily
 To maken up the lystes roially;
 That swich a noble theatre as it was, 1885
 I dar wel seyen, in this world ther nas.
 The circuit a myle was aboute,
 Walled of stoon, and dyched al withoute.
 Round was the shap, in manere of compas,
 Ful of degrees the heighte of sixty pas, 1890
 That whan a man was set on o degree,
 He lette nat his felawe for to see.
 Estward ther stood a gate of marbul whit,
 Westward, right swich another in the opposit;
 And shortly to concluden, swich a place 1895
 Was noon in erthe, as in so litel space.

For in the lond ther was no crafty man
 That geometrie or ars-metrik kan,
 Ne portreitour, ne kervere of ymages,
 That Theseus ne yaf him mete and wages 1900
 The theatre for to maken and devyse.
 And for to doon his ryte and sacrificise
 He estward hath upon the gate above,
 In worship of Venus, goddessse of love,
 Doon make an auter and an oratorie. 1905
 And on the gate westward, in memorie
 Of Mars, he maked hath right swich another,
 That coste largely of gold a fother.
 And northward, in a touret on the wal
 Of alabastre whit, and reed coral, 1910
 An oratorie, riche for to see,
 In worship of Dyane, of chastitee,
 Hath Theseus doon wroght in noble wyse.
 But yet hadde I foryeten to devyse
 The noble kervyng and the portreitures, 1915
 The shap, the contenance, and the figures,
 That weren in thise oratories thre.
 First in the temple of Venus maystow se
 Wroght on the wal, ful pitous to biholde,
 The broken slepes and the sikes colde, 1920
 The sacred teeris and the waymentynge,
 The firy strokes, and the desiryng
 That loves servauntz in this lyf enduren;
 The othes that her covenantz assuren;
 Plesaunce and Hope, Desir, Foolhardynesse, 1925
 Beautee and Youthe, Bauderie, Richesse,
 Charmes and Force, Lesynges, Flaterye,
 Despense, Bisynesse, and Jalousye,
 That wered of yelewe gooldes a gerland,
 And a cokkow sittynge on hir hand; 1930
 Festes, instrumentz, caroles, daunces,

Lust and array, and alle the circumstaunces
 Of love, whiche that I rekned, and rekne shal,
 By ordre weren peynted on the wal,
 And mo than I kan make of mencioung; 1935
 For soothly, al the mount of Citheroun,
 Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellynge,
 Was shewed on the wal in portreyynge,
 With al the gardyn and the lustynesse.
 Nat was foryeten the Porter Ydelnesse, 1940
 Ne Narcisus the faire, of yore agon,
 Ne yet the folye of kyng Salamon,
 And eek the grete strengthe of Ercules,
 Thenchautementz of Medea and Circes,
 Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage, 1945
 The riche Cresus, kaytyf in servage;
 Thus may ye seen, that wysdom ne richesse,
 Beautee ne sleighte, strengthe, hardynesse,
 Ne may with Venus holde champartie,
 For as hir list, the world than may she gye. 1950
 Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las,
 Til they for wo ful ofte seyde 'allas!'
 Suffiseth heere ensamples oon or two—
 And, though, I koude rekene a thousand mo.
 The statue of Venus, glorious for to se, 1955
 Was naked, fletynge in the large see,
 And fro the navele doun al covered was
 With wawes grene, and brighte as any glas.
 A citole in hir right hand hadde she,
 And on hir heed, ful semely for to se, 1960
 A rose gerland, fressh and wel smellynge;
 Above hir heed hir dowves flikerynge.
 Biforn hir stood hir sone, Cupido,
 Upon his shuldres wynges hadde he two,
 And blynd he was, as it was often scene. 1965
 A bowe he bar, and arwes brighte and kene.

Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle yow al
 The portreiture, that was upon the wal
 Wȝthinne the temple of myghty Mars the rede?
 Al peynted was the wal in lengthe and brede 1970
 Lyk to the estres of the grisly place
 That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace,
 In thilke colde frosty regioun
 Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.
 First on the wal was peynted a forest 1975
 In which ther dwelleth neither man ne best,
 With knotty knarry bareyne trees olde,
 Of stubbes sharpe and hidouse to biholde,
 In which ther ran a rumbel and a swough
 As though a storm sholde bresten every bough. 1980
 And downward from an hille, under a bente,
 Ther stood the temple of Mars Armypotente,
 Wroght al of burned steel, of which the entree
 Was long and streit, and gastly for to see,
 And therout came a rage and suche a veze, 1985
 That it made al the gate for to rese.
 The northren lyght in at the dores shoon,
 For wyndowe on the wal ne was ther noon,
 Thurgh which men myghten any light discerne.
 The dore was al of adamant eterne, 1990
 Yclenched overthwart and endelong
 With iren tough, and for to make it strong
 Every pyler, the temple to sustene,
 Was tonne-greet of iren bright and shene.
 Ther saugh I first the dirke ymaginyng 1995
 Of felonye, and al the compassyng,
 The crueel ire, reed as any gleede,
 The pykepurs, and eek the pale drede,
 The smyler with the knyfe under the cloke,
 The shepne brennynge with the blake smoke, 2000
 The tresoun of the mordrynge in the bedde,

The open werre, with woundes al biblesde,
 Contek, with bloody knyf and sharp manace,
 Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.
 The sleer of hymself yet saugh I ther, 2005
 His herte-blood hath bathed al his heer;
 The nayl ydryven in the shode a nyght,
 The colde deeth, with mouth gapyng upright.
 Amyddes of the temple sat Meschaunce,
 With Disconfort and Sory Contenaunce. 2010
 Yet saugh I Woodnesse laughynge in his rage,
 Armed Compleint, Outhees, and fiers Outrage;
 The careyne in the busk with throte ycorve,
 A thousand slayn, and nat of qualm ystorve,
 The tiraunt with the pray by force yraft, 2015
 The toun destroyed, ther was nothyng laft.
 Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres,
 The hunte strangled with the wilde beres,
 The sowe freten the child right in the cradel,
 The cook yscalded, for al his longe ladel. 2020
 Noght was foryeten by the infortune of Marte,
 The cartere over-ryden with his carte,
 Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.
 Ther were also, of Martes divisioun,
 The barbour, and the bocher, and the smyth 2025
 That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his styth.
 And al above, depeynted in a tour,
 Saugh I Conquest sittynge in greet honour,
 With the sharpe sword over his heed
 Hangynge by a soutil twyned threed. 2030
 Depeynted was the slaughtre of Julius,
 Of grete Nero, and of Antonius;
 Al be that thilke tyme they were unborn,
 Yet was hir deth depeynted therbiforn
 By manasyng of Mars, right by figure; 2035
 So was it shewed in that portreiture,

As is depeynted in the sterres above
 Who shal be slayn or elles deed for love.
 Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde,
 I may nat rekene hem alle though I wolde. 2040

The statue of Mars upon a carte stood
 Armed, and looked grym as he were wood,
 And over his heed ther shynen two figures
 Of sterres, that been cleped in scriptures
 That oon Puella, that oother Rubeus. 2045
 This god of armes was arrayed thus:
 A wolf ther stood biforn hym at his feet,
 With eyen rede, and of a man he eet.
 With soutil pencil was depeynt this storie,
 In redoutynge of Mars and of his glorie. 2050

Now to the temple of Dyane the chaste
 As shortly as I kan I wol me haste,
 To telle yow al the descripsioun.
 Depeynted been the walles up and doun
 Of huntyng and of shamefast chastitee. 2055
 Ther saugh I, how woful Calistopee
 Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
 Was turned from a womman til a bere,
 And after was she maad the loode-sterre;—
 Thus was it peynted, I kan sey yow no ferre— 2060
 Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may see.
 Ther saugh I Dane, yturned til a tree,
 I mene nat the goddesse Diane,
 But Penneus doughter which that highte Dane.
 Ther saugh I Attheon an hert ymaked, 2065
 For vengeaunce that he saugh Diane al naked.
 I saugh how that hise houndes have hym caught
 And freeten hym, for that they knewe hym naught.
 Yet peynted was a litel forthermoor
 How Atthalante hunted the wilde boor, 2070
 And Meleagree, and many another mo,

For which Dyane wroghte hym care and wo.
 Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
 The whiche me list nat drawn to memorie.
 This goddesse on an hert ful hye seet, 2075
 With smale houndes al aboute hir feet;
 And undernethe hir feet she hadde a moone,
 Wexynge it was, and sholde wanye soone.
 In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,
 With bowe in honde, and arwes in a cas. 2080
 Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun,
 Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.
 A womman travaillynge was hir biforn;
 But for hir child so longe was unborn
 Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle, 2085
 And seyde, "Help, for thou mayst best of alle!"
 Wel koude he peynten lyfly, that it wroghte,
 With many a floryn he the hewes boghte.

Now been thise listes maad, and Theseus,
 That at his grete cost arrayed thus 2090
 The temples, and the theatre every deel,
 Whan it was doon, hym lyked wonder weel.—
 But stynte I wole of Theseus a lite,
 And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
 The day approacheth of hir retournynge, 2095
 That everich sholde an hundred knyghtes brynge
 The bataille to darreyne, as I yow tolde.
 And til Atthenes, hir covenantz for to holde,
 Hath everich of hem broght an hundred knyghtes,
 Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes. 2100
 And sikerly, ther trowed many a man,
 That nevere sithen that the world bigan,
 As for to speke of knyghthod of hir hond,
 As fer as God hath maked see or lond,
 Nas of so fewe so noble a compaignye. 2105
 For every wight that lovede chivalrye,

And wolde, his thankes, han a passant name,
 Hath preyed that he myghte been of that game;
 And wel was hym that therto chosen was.
 For if ther fille tomorwe swich a cas 2110
 Ye knowen wel, that every lusty knyght
 That loveth paramours, and hath his myght,
 Were it in Engelond or elles where,
 They wolde, hir thankes, wilnen to be there,
 To fighte for a lady, benedicitee! 2115
 It were a lusty sighte for to see.
 And right so ferden they with Palamon,
 With hym ther wenten knyghtes many on.
 Som wol ben armed in an haubergeoun,
 In a bristplate, and in a light gypoun, 2120
 And somme woln have a paire plates large,
 And somme woln have a Puce sheeld, or a targe,
 Somme woln ben armed on hir legges weel,
 And have an ax, and somme a mace of steel.
 Ther is no newe gyse, that it nas old; 2125
 Armed were they, as I have yow told,
 Everych after his opinioun.
 Ther maistow seen comyng with Palamoun
 Lygurge hym-self, the grete kyng of Trace.
 Blak was his berd, and manly was his face, 2130
 The cercles of hise eyen in his heed,
 They gloweden bitwyxen yelow and reed,
 And lik a griffon looked he aboute,
 With kempe heeris on hise browes stoute,
 Hise lymes grete, hise brawnes harde and stronge, 2135
 Hise shuldres brode, hise armes rounde and longe;
 And as the gyse was in his contree,
 Ful hye upon a chaar of gold stood he,
 With foure white boles in the trays.
 In stede of cote-armure, over his harnays 2140
 With nayles yelewe and brighte as any gold

He hadde a beres skyn, colblak, for-old;
 His longe heer was kembd bihynde his bak,
 As any ravenes fethere it shoon for-blak.
 A wrethe of gold arm-greet, of huge wighte, 2145
 Upon his heed, set ful of stones brighte,
 Of fyne rubyes and of dyamauntz.
 Aboute his chaar ther wenten white alauntz,
 Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,
 To huntun at the leoun or the deer, 2150
 And folwed hym, with mosel faste ybounde,
 Colored of gold, and tourettes fyled rounde.
 An hundred lordes hadde he in his route,
 Armed ful wel, with hertes stierne and stoute.
 With Arcita, in stories as men fynde, 2155
 The grete Emetreus, the kyng of Inde,
 Upon a steede bay, trapped in steel,
 Covered in clooth of gold dyapred weel,
 Cam ridynge lyk the god of armes, Mars.
 His cote-armure was of clooth of Tars, 2160
 Couched with perles white and rounde and grete.
 His sadel was of brend gold newe ybete;
 A mantelet upon his shuldre hangynge
 Bret-ful of rubyes rede, as fyr sparklynge.
 His crispe heer lyk rynges was yronne, 2165
 And that was yelow, and glytered as the sonne.
 His nose was heigh, hise eyen bright citryn,
 Hise lippes rounde, his colour was sangwyn;
 A fewe frakenes in his face yspreynd,
 Bitwixen yelow and somdel blak ymeynd, 2170
 And as a leoun he his looking caste.
 Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste;
 His berd was wel bigonne for to sprynge,
 His voys was as a trompe thonderynge.
 Upon his heed he wered of laurer grene 2175
 A gerland, fressh and lusty for to sene.

Upon his hand he bar for his deduyt
 An egle tame, as any lilye whyt.
 An hundred lordes hadde he with hym there,
 Al armed, save hir heddes, in al hir gere, 2180
 Ful richely in alle maner thynges.
 For trusteth wel, that dukes, erles, kynges,
 Were gadered in this noble compaignye,
 For love, and for encrees of chivalrye.
 Aboute this kyng ther ran on every part 2185
 Ful many a tame leoun and leopard,
 And in this wise thise lordes alle and some
 Been on the Sonday to the citee come,
 Aboute pryme, and in the toun alight.
 This Theseus, this duc, this worthy knyght, 2190
 Whan he had broght hem into his citee,
 And inned hem, everich in his degree,
 He festeth hem, and dooth so greet labour
 To esen hem and doon hem al honour,
 That yet men weneth that no maner wit 2195
 Of noon estaat ne koude amenden it.
 The mynstralcy, the service at the feeste,
 The grete yiftes to the mooste and leeste,
 The riche array of Theseus paleys,
 Ne who sat first ne last upon the deys, 2200
 What ladyes fairest been, or best daunsynge,
 Or which of hem kan dauncen best and synge,
 Ne who moost felyngly speketh of love,
 What haukes sitten on the perche above,
 What houndes ligen ih the floor adoun— 2205
 Of al this make I now no mencion;
 But, al theeffect, that thynketh me the beste,
 Now cometh the point, and herkneth if yow leste.
 The Sonday nyght, er day bigan to sprynge,
 Whan Palamon the larke herde synge, 2210
 Al though it nere nat day by houres two,
 Yet song the larke, and Palamon also.

With hooly herte and with an heigh corage
 He roos, to wenden on his pilgrymage,
 Unto the blisful Citherea benigne, 2215
 I mene Venus, honorable and digne.
 And in hir houre he walketh forth a pas
 Unto the lystes, ther hire temple was,
 And doun he kneleth, with ful humble cheer,
 And herte soor, and seyde in this manere. 2220
 "Faireste of faire, O lady myn, Venus,
 Doughter to Jove, and spouse of Vulcanus,
 Thow glader of the Mount of Citheron,
 For thilke love thow haddest to Adoon,
 Have pitee of my bittre teeris smerte, 2225
 And taak myn humble preyere at thyn herte.
 Allas, I ne have no langage to telle
 Theffectes, ne the tormentz of myn helle!
 Myn herte may myne harmes nat biwreye,
 I am so confus that I kan noght seye. 2230
 But mercy, lady bright! that knowest weele
 My thought, and seest what harmes that I feele.
 Considere al this, and rewe upon my soore,
 As wisly, as I shal for everemoore,
 Emforth my myght, thy trewe servant be, 2235
 And holden werre alwey with chastitee.
 That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.
 I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe,
 Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to have victorie,
 Ne renoun in this cas, ne veyne glorie 2240
 Of pris of armes blowen up and doun,
 But I wolde have fully possessioun
 Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse.
 Fynd thow the manere how, and in what wyse—
 I recche nat, but it may bettre be 2245
 To have victorie of hem, or they of me—
 So that I have my lady in myne armes.
 For though so be, that Mars is god of armes,

Youre vertu is so greet in hevene above
 That if yow list, I shal wel have my love. 2250
 Thy temple wol I worshipe everemo,
 And on thyn auter, where I ride or go,
 I wol doon sacrifice and fires beete.
 And if ye wol nat so, my lady sweete,
 Thanne preye I thee, tomorwe with a spere 2255
 That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere.
 Thanne rekke I noght, whan I have lost my lyf,
 Though that Arcita wyne hir to his wyf.
 This is theeffect and ende of my preyere,
 Yif me my love, thow blisful lady deere!" 2260
 Whan the orison was doon of Palamon,
 His sacrifice he dide, and that anon,
 Ful pitously with alle circumstaunce;
 Al telle I noght as now his observaunce.
 But atte laste, the statue of Venus shook, 2265
 And made a signe wherby that he took
 That his preyere accepted was that day.
 For thogh the signe shewed a delay,
 Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his boone,
 And with glad herte he wente hym hoom ful soone. 2270
 The thridde houre inequal, that Palamon
 Bigan to Venus temple for to gon,
 Up roos the sonne, and up roos Emelye,
 And to the temple of Dyane gan hye.
 Hir maydens that she thider with hir ladde, 2275
 Ful redily with hem the fyr they ladde,
 Thencens, the clothes, and the remenant al
 That to the sacrifice longen shal.
 The hornes fulle of meeth, as was the gyse,
 Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrificse, 2280
 Smokyng the temple, ful of clothes faire.
 This Emelye, with herte debonaire,
 Hir body wessh with water of a welle—
 But how she dide hir ryte I dar nat telle,

But it be any thing in general; 2285
 And yet it were a game to heeren al,
 To hym that meneth wel it were no charge,
 But it is good a man been at his large.—

Hir brighte heer was kempt untressed al,
 A coroune of a grene ook cerial 2290
 Upon hir heed was set, ful fair and meete.
 Two fyres on the auter gan she beete,
 And dide hir thynges as men may biholde
 In Stace of Thebes, and thise bookes olde.
 Whan kyndled was the fyr, with pitous cheere 2295
 Unto Dyane she spak as ye may heere.

“O chaste goddesses of the wodes grene,
 To whom bothe hevene and erthe and see is sene,
 Queene of the regne of Pluto derk and lowe,
 Goddesses of maydens, that myn herte hast knowe 2300
 Ful many a yeer, and woost what I desire,
 As keep me fro thy vengeaunce and thyn ire,
 That Attheon aboughte cruelly.
 Chaste goddesses, wel wostow that I
 Desire to ben a mayden al my lyf, 2305
 Ne nevere wol I be no love ne wyf.
 I am, thow woost, yet of thy compaignye,
 A mayde, and love huntynge and venerye,
 And for to walken in the wodes wilde,
 And noght to ben a wyf, and be with childe. 2310
 Noght wol I knowe the compaignye of man;
 Now helpe me, lady, sith ye may and kan,
 For tho thre formes that thou hast in thee.
 And Palamon, that hath swich love to me,
 And eek Arcite, that loveth me so sore, 2315
 This grace I preye thee, withoute moore,
 As sende love and pees bitwixe hem two,
 And fro me turne away hir hertes so,
 That al hir hoote love and hir desir,

And al hir bisy torment and hir fir, 2320
 Be queynt, or turned in another place.
 And if so be thou wolt do me no grace,
 And if my destynce be shapen so
 That I shal nedes have oon of hem two,
 As sende me hym that moost desireth me. 2325
 Bihoold, goddesse, of clene chastitee,
 The bittre teeris that on my chekes falle.
 Syn thou art mayde and kepere of us alle,
 My maydenhede thou kepe and wel conserve,
 And whil I lyve a mayde, I wol thee serve." 2330
 The fires brenne upon the auter cleere,
 Whil Emelye was thus in hir preyere;
 But sodeynly she saugh a sighte queynte,
 For right anon oon of the fyres queynte,
 And quyked agayn, and after that anon 2335
 That oother fyr was queynt and al agon.
 And as it queynte, it made a whistelynge
 As doon thise wete brondes in hir brennynge;
 And at the brondes ende out ran anon
 As it were bloody dropes many oon; 2340
 For which so soore agast was Emelye
 That she was wel ny mad, and gan to crye;
 For she ne wiste what it signyfied.
 But oonly for the feere thus hath she cried,
 And weep that it was pitee for to heere; 2345
 And therwithal Dyane gan appeere,
 With bowe in honde, right as an hunteresse,
 And seyde, "Doghter, stynt thyn hevynesse.
 Among the goddes hye it is affermed,
 And by eterne word writen and confermed, 2350
 Thou shalt ben wedded unto oon of tho
 That han for thee so muchel care and wo.
 But unto which of hem I may nat telle,
 Farwel, for I ne may no lenger dwelle.
 2337 whistlynge.

The fires whiche that on myn auter brenne . 2355
 Shule thee declaren, er that thou go henne,
 Thyn aventure of love, as in this cas."

And with that word, the arwes in the caas
 Of the goddesse clateren faste and rynge,
 And forth she wente, and made a vanysshynge, 2360
 For which this Emelye astoned was,
 And seyde, "What amounteth this, allas !

I putte me in thy proteccioun,
 Dyane, and in thy disposicioun !"
 And hoom she goth anon the nexte weye. 2365
 This is theeffect, ther is namoore to seye.

The nexte houre of Mars folwyng this
 Arcite unto the temple walked is
 Of fierse Mars, to doon his sacrificise
 With alle the rytes of his payen wyse. 2370
 With pitous herte and heigh devocioun
 Right thus to Mars he seyde his orisoun.

"O stronge god, that in the regnes colde
 Of Trace honoured art and lord yholde,
 And hast in every regne and every lond 2375
 Of armes al the brydel in thyn hond,
 And hem fortunest as thee lyst devyse,
 Accepte of me my pitous sacrificise.

If so be that my youthe may deserve,
 And that my myght be worthy for to serve 2380
 Thy godhede, that I may been oon of thyne,
 Thanne preye I thee to rewe upon my pyne.

For thilke peyne, and thilke hoote fir,
 In which thou whilom brendest for desir
 Whan that thou usedest the greet beautee 2385
 Of faire yonge fresshe Venus free,
 And haddest hir in armes at thy wille—

Al though thee ones on a tyme mysfille
 Whan Vulcanus hadde caught thee in his las,

- And foond thee liggyng by his wyf, alas!— 2390
 For thilke sorwe that was in thyn herte
 Have routhe as wel, upon my peynes smerte!
 I am yong and unkonnyng as thou woost,
 And, as I trowe, with love offended moost
 That evere was any lyves creature; 2395
 For she that dooth me al this wo endure,
 Ne reccheth nevere wher I synke or fleete.
 And wel I woot, er she me mercy heete,
 I moot with strengthe wynne hir in the place.
 And wel I woot, withouten help or grace 2400
 Of thee, ne may my strengthe noght availle.
 Thanne help me, lord, tomorwe in my bataille
 For thilke fyr that whilom brente thee,
 As wel as thilke fyr now brenneth me!
 And do that I tomorwe have victorie, 2405
 Myn be the travaille and thyn be the glorie.
 Thy sovereyn temple wol I moost honouren
 Of any place, and alwey moost labouren
 In thy plesaunce, and in thy craftes stronge,
 And in thy temple I wol my baner honge, 2410
 And alle the armes of my compaignye;
 And evere-mo, unto that day I dye,
 Eterne fir I wol biforn thee fynde.
 And eek to this avow I wol me bynde;
 My beerd, myn heer, that hongeth long adoun, 2415
 That nevere yet ne felte offensioun
 Of rasour, nor of shere, I wol thee yeve,
 And ben thy trewe servant whil I lyve.
 Now lord, have routhe upon my sorwes soore;
 Yif me the victorie, I aske thee namoore!" 2420
 The preyere stynt of Arcita the stronge;
 The rynges on the temple dore that honge,
 And eek the dores clatereden ful faste,
 Of which Arcita somewhat hym agaste.
 The fyres brenden upon the auter brighte, 2425

That it gan al the temple for to lighte,
 And sweete smel the ground anon upyaf,
 And Arcita anon his hand uphaf,
 And moore encens into the fyr he caste,
 With othere rytes mo, and atte laste 2430
 The statue of Mars bigan his hauberk rynge,
 And with that soun he herde a murmurynge,
 Ful lowe and dym, and seyde thus, 'Victorie!
 For which he yaf to Mars honour and glorie;
 And thus with joye and hope wel to fare, 2435
 Arcite anon unto his in is fare,
 As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne.

And right anon swich strif ther is bigonne
 For thilke grauntyng in the hevene above
 Bitwixe Venus, the Goddesse of Love, 2440
 And Mars the stierne God armypotente,
 That Jupiter was bisy it to stente;
 Til that the pale Saturnus the colde,
 That knew so manye of adventures olde,
 Foond in his olde experience an art 2445
 That he ful soone hath plesed every part.
 As sooth is seyde, elde hath greet advantage;
 In elde is bothe wysdom and usage;
 Men may the olde atrenne, and noght atrede.
 Saturne anon, to stynten strif and drede, 2450
 Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,
 Of al this strif he gan remedie fynde.
 "My deere doghter Venus," quod Saturne,
 "My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,
 Hath moore power than woot any man. 2455
 Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan,
 Myn is the prison in the derke cote,
 Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte,
 The murmure, and the cherles rebellyng,
 The groynnyng, and the pryvee empoysonyng. 2460

I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun,
 Whil I dwelle in the signe of the leoun.
 Myn is the ruyne of the hye halles,
 The fallynge of the toures and of the walles
 Upon the mynour, or the carpenter. 2465
 I slow Sampson shakynge the piler,
 And myne be the maladyes colde,
 The derke tresons, and the castes olde;
 My lookyng is the fader of pestilence.
 Now weep namore, I shal doon diligence 2470
 That Palamon, that is thyn owene knyght,
 Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.
 Though Mars shal helpe his knyght, yet nathelees
 Bitwixe yow ther moot be somtyme pees,
 Al be ye noght of o compleccioun— 2475
 That causeth al day swich divisioun.
 I am thyn aiel, redy at thy wille,
 Weep now namore, I wol thy lust fulfille.”
 Now wol I stynten of the goddes above,
 Of Mars and of Venus, goddesse of Love, 2480
 And telle yow, as pleyonly as I kan,
 The grete effect for which that I bygan.

Explicit tercia pars.

Sequitur pars quarta.

Greet was the feeste in Atthenes that day,
 And eek the lusty seson of that May
 Made every wight to been in such plesaunce 2485
 That al that Monday justen they and daunce,
 And spenten it in Venus heigh servyse.
 And by the cause that they sholde ryse
 Eerly for to seen the grete fight,
 Unto hir reste wenten they at nyght. 2490
 And on the morwe, whan that day gan sprynge,

Of hors and harneys, noyse and claterynge
 Ther was in hostelryes al aboute.
 And to the paleys rood ther many a route
 Of lordes, upon steedes and palfreys. 2495
 Ther maystow seen divisynge of harneys
 So unkouth and so riche, and wroght so weel,
 Of goldsmythrye, of browdyng, and of steel;
 The sheeldes brighte, testerres, and trappures;
 Gold-hewen helmes, hauberkes, cote-armures; 2500
 Lordes in parementz on hir courseres,
 Knyghtes of retenue and eek squieres,
 Nailynge the speres, and helmes bokelynge,
 Giggyng of sheeldes, with layneres lacyng.
 There as nede is, they weren nothyng ydel. 2505
 The fomy steedes on the golden brydel
 Gnawynge, and faste the armurers also
 With fyle and hamer prikyng to and fro;
 Yemen on foote and communes many oon,
 With shorte staves thikke as they may goon, 2510
 Pypes, trompes, nakerers, clariounes,
 That in the bataille blowen bloody sounes;
 The paleys ful of peples up and down,
 Heere thre, ther ten, holdynge hir questioun,
 Dyvynynge of thise Thebane knyghtes two. 2515
 Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal be so,
 Somme helden with hym with the blake berd,
 Somme with the balled, somme with the thikke-herd,
 Somme seyde he looked grymme, and he wolde fighte,
 He hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte, 2520
 Thus was the halle ful of divynynge
 Longe after that the sonne gan to sprynge.
 The grete Theseus, that of his sleep awaked
 With mynstralcie and noyse that was maked,
 Heeld yet the chambre of his paleys riche, 2525
 Til that the Thebane knyghtes, bothe yliche
 Honored, were into the paleys fet.

Duc Theseus was at a wyndow set,
 Arrayed, right as he were a god in trone.
 The peple preesseth thiderward ful soone, 2530
 Hym for to seen and doon heigh reverence.
 And eek to herkne his heste and his sentence.
 An heraud on a scaffold made an "Oo!"
 Til al the noyse of peple was ydo,
 And whan he saugh the peple of noyse al stille, 2535
 Tho shewed he the myghty dukes wille.
 "The lord hath of his heigh discrecioun
 Considered, that it were destruccioun
 To gentil blood, to fighten in the gyse
 Of mortal bataille, now in this emprise; 2540
 Wherfore, to shapen that they shal nat dye,
 He wolde his firste purpos modifye.
 No man therfore, up peyne of los of lyf,
 No maner shot, ne polax, ne short knyf
 Into the lystes sende, ne thider brynge. 2545
 Ne short swerd for to stoke, with poynt bitynge,
 No man ne drawe, ne bere by his syde;
 Ne no man shal unto his felawe ryde
 But o cours, with a sharpe ygrounde spere.
 Foyne if hym list on foote, hym-self to were; 2550
 And he that is at meschief shal be take,
 And noght slayn, but be broght unto the stake
 That shal ben ordeyned on either syde,
 But thider he shal by force, and there abyde.
 And if so be the chevetayn be take 2555
 On outhur syde, or elles sleen his make,
 No lenger shal the turneynge laste.
 God spede you, gooth forth, and ley on faste!
 With long swerd and with maces fight youre fille;
 Gooth now youre wey, this is the lordes wille." 2560
 The voys of peple touchede the hevene,
 So loude cride they with murie stevene,

"God save swich a lord, that is so good
 He wilneth no destruccion of blood."
 Up goon the trompes and the melodye, 2565
 And to the lystes rit the compaignye,
 By ordinance, thurgh-out the citee large
 Hanged with clooth of gold, and nat with sarge.
 Ful lik a lord this noble duc gan ryde,
 Thise two Thebanes upon either syde, 2570
 And after rood the queene and Emelye,
 And after that another compaignye,
 Of oon and oother, after hir degre;
 And thus they passen thurgh-out the citee
 And to the lystes come they by tyme. 2575
 It nas nat of the day yet fully pryme
 Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hye,
 Ypolita the queene, and Emelye,
 And othere ladys in degrees aboute.
 Unto the seettes preeseth al the route, 2580
 And westward thurgh the gates under Marte,
 Arcite, and eek the hondred of his parte,
 With baner reed is entred right anon.
 And in that selve moment Palamon
 Is under Venus estward in the place, 2585
 With baner whyt, and hardy chiere and face.
 In al the world to seken up and down
 So evene withouten variacioun
 Ther nere swiche compaignyes tweye!
 For ther was noon so wys, that koude seye 2590
 That any hadde of oother avauntage,
 Of worthynesse ne of estaat ne age,
 So evene were they chosen, for to gesse.
 And in two renges faire they hem dresse,
 Whan that hir names rad were everichon, 2595
 That in hir nombre gyle were ther noon.
 Tho were the gates shet and cried was loude,

"Do now youre devoir, yonge knyghtes proude!"
 The heraudes lefte hir prikyng up and down;
 Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun. 2600
 Ther is namoore to seyn, but west and est
 In goon the speres ful sadly in arrest,
 In gooth the sharpe spore into the syde.
 Ther seen men who kan juste, and who kan ryde,
 Ther shyveren shaftes upon sheeldes thikke; 2605
 He feeleth thurgh the herte-spoon the prikke.
 Up spryngen speres twenty foot on highte;
 Out gooth the swerdes as the silver brighte.
 The helmes they tohewen and toshrede,
 Out brest the blood, with stierne stremes rede, 2610
 With myghty maces the bones they tobreste.
 He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste;
 Ther stomblen steedes stronge, and doun gooth al;
 He rolleth under foot as dooth a bal,
 He foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun, 2615
 And he hym hurtleth with his hors adoun.
 He thurgh the body is hurt and sithen ytake,
 Maugree his heed, and broght unto the stake,
 As forward was, right there he moste abyde;
 Another lad is on that oother syde. 2620
 And som tyme dooth hem Theseus to reste,
 Hem to refresshe, and drynken if hem leste.
 Ful ofte a day han thise Thebanes two
 Togydre ymet, and wroght his felawe wo.
 Unhorsed hath ech oother of hem tweye, 2625
 Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgopheye
 Whan that hir whelp is stole, whan it is lite,
 So crueel on the hunte, as is Arcite
 For jelous herte upon this Palamoun;
 Ne in Belmarye ther nys so fel leoun 2630
 That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
 Ne of his praye desireth so the blood,

As Palamoun to sleen his foo Arcite.
 The jelous strokes on hir helmes byte,
 Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydes rede. 2635

Som tyme an ende ther is of every dede;
 For er the sonne unto the reste wente,
 The stronge kyng Emetreus gan hente
 This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,
 And made his swerd depe in his flessch to byte. 2640

And by the force of twenty is he take
 Unyolden, and ydrawe unto the stake.
 And in the rescous of this Palamoun
 The stronge kyng Lygurge is born adoun,
 And kyng Emetreus, for al his strengthe, 2645

Is born out of his sadel a swerdes lengthe,
 So hitte him Palamoun er he were take;
 But al for noght, he was broght to the stake.
 His hardy herte myghte hym helpe naught,
 He moste abyde, whan that he was caught, 2650
 By force, and eek by composicioun.

Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun,
 That moot namoore goon agayn to fighte?
 And whan that Theseus hadde seyn this sighte
 Unto the folk that foghten thus echon 2655
 He cryde, "Hoo! namoore, for it is doon.

I wol be trewe juge, and no partie;
 Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelie,
 That by his fortune hath hir faire ywonne!"
 Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne 2660
 For joye of this so loude and heighe withalle
 It semed that the lystes sholde falle.

What kan now faire Venus doon above?
 What seith she now, what dooth this queene of Love,
 But wepeth so, for wantynge of hir wille, 2665
 Til that hir teeres in the lystes fille.
 She seyde, "I am ashamed, doutelees."

Saturnus seyde, "Doghter, hoold thy pees,
 Mars hath his wille, his knyght hath al his boone,
 And, by myn heed, thow shalt been esed soone." 2670

The trompes with the loude mynstralcie,
 The heraudes that ful loude yolle and crie,
 Been in hir wele for joye of Daun Arcite.
 But herkneth me, and stynteth now a lite,
 Which a myracle ther bifel anon. 2675

This fierse Arcite hath of his helm ydon,
 And on a courser for to shewe his face
 He priketh endelong the large place,
 Lokynge upward upon this Emelye,
 And she agayn hym caste a freendlich eye, 2680

(For wommen, as to speken in commune,
 They folwen al the favour of Fortune)
 And she was al his chiere, as in his herte.
 Out of the ground a furie infernal sterte,
 From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne, 2685

For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
 And leep aside and foundred as he leep.
 And er that Arcite may taken keep,
 He pighte hym on the pomel of his heed,
 That in the place he lay as he were deed, 2690
 His brest tobrosten with his sadel-bowe.

As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,
 So was the blood yronnen in his face.
 Anon he was yborn out of the place,
 With herte soor, to Theseus paleys. 2695

Tho was he korven out of his harneys,
 And in a bed ybrought ful faire and blyve,
 For he was yet in memorie and alyve,
 And alwey crynge after Emelye.
 Duc Theseus, with al his compaignye, 2700

Is comen hoom to Atthenes his citee,
 With alle blisse and greet solempnitee;

Al be it that this aventure was falle,
 He nolde noght disconforten hem alle.
 Men seyde eek that Arcite shal nat dye, 2705
 He shal been heeled of his maladye.
 And of another thyng they weren as fayn,
 That of hem alle was ther noon yslayn,
 Al were they soore yhurt, and namely oon,
 That with a spere was thirled his brest-boon. 2710
 To othere woundes, and to broken armes,
 Somme hadden salves, and somme hadden charmes,
 Fermacies of herbes and eek save
 They dronken, for they wolde hir lymes have.
 For which this noble duc as he wel kan, 2715
 Conforteth and honoureth every man,
 And made revel al the longe nyght
 Unto the straunge lordes, as was right.
 Ne ther was holden no disconftyng
 But as a justes or a tourneyng, 2720
 For soothly ther was no disconfiture—
 For fallyng nys nat but an aventure—
 Ne to be lad by force unto the stake
 Unyolden, and with twenty knyghtes take,
 O persone allone, withouten mo, 2725
 And haryed forth by arme, foot, and too,
 And eke his steede dryven forth with staves,
 With footmen, bothe yemen and eek knaves,
 It nas aretted hym no vileynye,
 Ther may no man clepen it cowardye. 2730
 For which anon duc Theseus leet crye,
 To stynten alle rancour and envye,
 The gree, as wel of o syde as of oother,
 And eyther syde ylik as ootheres brother,
 And yaf hem yiftes after hir degree, 2735
 And fully heeld a feeste dayes three,
 And convoyed the kynges worthily

Out of his toun a journee, largely;
 And hoom wente every man, the righte way,
 Ther was namoore but 'fare-wel, have good day.' 2740
 Of this bataille I wol namoore endite,
 But speke of Palamoun and of Arcyte.
 Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the soore
 Encreesseth at his herte moore and moore.
 The clothered blood for any lechecraft 2745
 Corrupteth, and is in his bouk ylaft,
 That neither veyne-blood, ne ventusynge,
 Ne drynke of herbes may ben his helpynge.
 The vertu expulsif, or animal,
 Fro thilke vertu cleped natural 2750
 Ne may the venym voyden, ne expelle.
 The pipes of his longes gonne to swelle,
 And every lacerte in his brest adoun
 Is shent with venym and corrupcioun.
 Hym gayneth neither for to gete his lif 2755
 Vomyt upward, ne downward laxatif;
 Al is tobrosten thilke regioun,
 Nature hath now no dominacioun.
 And certainly, ther Nature wol nat wirche,
 Fare-wel phisik, go ber the man to chirche! 2760
 This al and som, that Arcita moot dye;
 For which he sendeth after Emelye
 And Palamon, that was his cosyn deere.
 Thanne seyde he thus, as ye shal after heere:
 "Naught may the woful spirit in myn herte 2765
 Declare o point of alle my sorwes smerte
 To yow, my lady, that I love moost.
 But I biquethe the servyce of my goost
 To yow aboven every creature.
 Syn that my lyf may no lenger dure, 2770
 Allas, the wo! allas, the peynes stronge
 That I for yow have suffred, and so longe!
 Allas, the deeth! allas, myn Emelye!

Allas, departynge of our compaignye!

Allas, myn hertes queene! alas, my wyf! 2775

Myn hertes lady, endere of my lyf!

What is this world? what asketh men to have?

Now with his love, now in his colde grave,

Allone, withouten any compaignye.

Fare-wel, my swete foo, myn Emelye, 2780

And softe taak me in youre armes tweye,

For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.

“I have heer with my cosyn Palamon

Had strif and rancour many a day agon,

For love of yow, and for my jalousye. 2785

And Juppiter so wys my soule gye

To speken of a servaunt proprely,

With alle circumstances trewely,

That is to seyn, trouthe, honour, and knyghthede,

Wysdom, humblesse, estaat, and heigh kynrede, 2790

Freedom, and al that longeth to that art,

So Juppiter have of my soule part

As in this world right now ne knowe I non

So worthy to ben loved, as Palamon

That serveth yow, and wol doon al his lyf; 2795

And if that evere ye shul ben a wyf,

Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man.”

And with that word his speche faille gan,

And from his herte up to his brest was come

The coold of deeth, that hadde hym overcome. 2800

And yet moreover in hise armes two

The vital strengthe is lost and al ago.

Only the intellect, withouten moore,

That dwelled in his herte syk and soore

Gan faillen, when the herte felte deeth. 2805

Dusked hise eyen two, and failled breeth,

But on his lady yet caste he his eye.

His laste word was “mercy, Emelye!”

His spirit chaunged hous, and wente ther
 As I cam nevere, I kan nat tellen wher, 2810
 Therfore I stynte; I nam no divinistre,
 Of soules fynde I nat in this registre,
 Ne me ne list thilke opinions to telle
 Of hem, though that they writen wher they dwelle.
 Arcite is coold, ther Mars his soule gye: 2815
 Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.

Shrighte Emelye, and howleth Palamon,
 And Theseus his suster took anon
 Swownynge, and baar hir fro the corps away.
 What helpeth it to tarien forth the day 2820
 To tellen how she weep bothe eve and morwe?
 For in swich cas wommen have swich sorwe
 Whan that hir housbond is from hem ago,
 That for the moore part they sorwen so,
 Or ellis fallen in swich maladye, 2825
 That at the laste certainly they dye.
 Infinite been the sorwes and the teeres
 Of olde folk, and eek of tendre yeeres
 In al the toun, for deeth of this Theban.
 For hym ther wepeth bothe child and man; 2830
 So greet a wepyng was ther noon, certayn,
 Whan Ector was ybrought al fressh yslayn
 To Troye, alas, the pitee that was ther!
 Cracchyng of chekes, rentynge eek of heer;—
 “Why woldestow be deed,” thise wommen crye, 2835
 “And haddest gold ynough, and Emelye?”
 No man myghte gladen Theseus,
 Savyng his olde fader, Egeus,
 That knew this worldes transmutacioun,
 As he hadde seyn it chaungen up and doun, 2840
 Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse,
 And shewed hem ensamples and liknesse.

“Right as ther dyed nevere man,” quod he,

"That he ne lyvede in erthe in som degree,
 Right so ther lyvede never man," he seyde, 2845
 "In al this world that somtyme he ne deyde.
 This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,
 And we been pilgrymes passynge to and fro.
 Deeth is an ende of every worldes soore."
 And over al this yet seyde he muchel moore, 2850
 To this effect ful wisely to enhort
 The peple, that they sholde hem reconforte.

Duc Theseus, with al his bisy cure,
 Caste now, wher that the sepulture
 Of goode Arcite may best ymaked be, 2855
 And eek moost honourable in his degree.
 And at the laste he took conclusioun
 That ther as first Arcite and Palamoun
 Hadden for love the bataille hem bitwene,
 That in that selve grove swoote and grene 2860
 Ther as he hadde hise amoureuse desires,
 His compleynte, and for love hise hote fires
 He wolde make a fyr, in which the office
 Funeral he myghte al accomplice;
 And leet comande anon to hakke and hewe 2865
 The okes olde, and leye hem on a rewe
 In colpons, wel arrayed for to brenne.
 Hise officers with swifte feet they renne
 And ryden anon at his comandement;
 And after this Theseus hath ysent 2870
 After a beere, and it al over-spradde
 With clooth of gold, the richeste that he hadde.
 And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite,
 Upon his hondes hadde he gloves white,
 Eek on his heed a coroune of laurer grene, 2875
 And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
 He leyde hym bare the visage on the beere,
 Ther-with he weep that pitee was to heere.

And for the peple sholde seen hym alle,
 Whan it was day, he broghte hym to the halle, 2880
 That roreth of the cryng and the soun.
 Tho cam this woful Theban, Palamoun,
 With flotery berd and rugged asshy heeres,
 In clothes blake, ydropped al with teeres,
 And passynge othere of wepynge Emelye, 2885
 The rewefulleste of al the compaignye.
 In as muche as the servyce sholde be
 The moore noble and riche in his degree,
 Duc Theseus leet forth thre steedes brynge
 That trapped were in steel al gliterynge, 2890
 And covered with the armes of daun Arcite.
 Upon thise steedes that weren grete and white
 Ther sitten folk, of whiche oon baar his sheeld,
 Another his spere up in his hondes heeld,
 The thridde baar with hym his bowe Turkeys, 2895
 Of brend gold was the caas, and eek the harneys;
 And riden forth a paas, with sorweful cheere,
 Toward the grove, as ye shul after heere.
 The nobleste of the Grekes that ther were
 Upon hir shuldres caryeden the beere, 2900
 With slakke paas, and eyen rede and wete,
 Thurghout the citee by the maister-strete,
 That sprad was al with blak, and wonder hye
 Right of the same is the strete ywrye.
 Upon the right hond wente olde Egeus, 2905
 And on that oother syde duc Theseus,
 With vessel in hir hand of gold ful fyn,
 Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn.
 Eek Palamon, with ful greet compaignye,
 And after that cam woful Emelye, 2910
 With fyr in honde, as was that tyme the gyse,
 To do the office of funeral servyse.

Heigh labour, and ful greet apparaillynge,

Was at the service and the fyr makynge,
 That with his grene top the heven raughte, 2915
 And twenty fadme of brede the armes straughte;
 This is to seyn, the bowes weren so brode.
 Of stree first ther was leyd ful many a lode,
 But how the fyr was maked upon highte,
 Ne eek the names that the trees highte, 2920
 As, ook, firre, birch, aspe, alder, holm, popeler,
 Wylugh, elm, plane, asshe, box, chasteyn, lynde, laurer,
 Mapul, thorn, bech, hasel, ew, whippeltre,
 How they weren fild shal nat be toold for me,
 Ne how the goddes ronnen up and doun 2925
 Dishherited of hir habitacioun,
 In whiche they woneden in reste and pees,
 Nymphes, Fawnes, and Amadrides;
 Ne how the beestes and the briddes alle
 Fledden for fere, whan the wode was falle; 2930
 Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
 That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright;
 Ne how the fyr was couched first with stree,
 And thanne with drye stokkes cloven a thre,
 And thanne with grene wode and spicerye, 2935
 And thanne with clooth of gold and with perrye,
 And gerlandes hangynge with ful many a flour,
 The mirre, thencens, with al so greet odour;
 Ne how Arcite lay among al this,
 Ne what richesse aboute his body is, 2940
 Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,
 Putte in the fyr of funeral servyse;
 Ne how she swowned whan men made the fyr,
 Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desir,
 Ne what jeweles men in the fyr caste, 2945
 Whan that the fyr was greet and brente faste;
 Ne how somme caste hir sheeld, and somme hir spere,
 And of hire vestimentz whiche that they were,

And coppes full of wyn, and milk, and blood,
 Into the fyr, that brente as it were wood, 2950
 Ne how the Grekes, with an huge route,
 Thryes riden al the place aboute,
 Upon the left hand with a loud shoutynge,
 And thries with hir speres claterynge,
 And thries how the ladyes gonne crye, 2955
 And how that lad was homward Emelye;
 Ne how Arcite is brent to asshen colde,
 Ne how that lychewake was yholde
 Al thilke nyght, ne how the Grekes pleye
 The wakepleyes ne kepe I nat to seye, 2960
 Who wrastleth best naked, with oille enoynt,
 Ne who that baar hym best in no disjoynt;
 I wol nat tellen eek, how that they goon
 Hoom til Atthenes, whan the pley is doon;
 But shortly to the point thanne wol I wende, 2965
 And maken of my longe tale an ende.

By processe, and by lengthe of certeyn yeres,
 Al stynted is the moornynge and the teres
 Of Grekes, by oon general assent.
 Thanne semed me ther was a parlement 2970
 At Atthenes, upon certein pointz and caas,
 Among the whiche pointz yspoken was
 To have with certein contrees alliaunce,
 And have fully of Thebans obeisaunce,
 For which this noble Theseus anon 2975
 Leet senden after gentil Palamon,
 Unwist of hym what was the cause and why.
 But in hise blake clothes sorwefully
 He cam at his comandement in hye;
 Tho sente Theseus for Emelye. 2980
 Whan they were set, and hust was al the place,
 And Theseus abiden hadde a space
 Er any word cam fram his wise brest,

Hise eyen sette he ther as was his lest,
 And with a sad visage he siked stille, 2985
 And after that right thus he seyde his wille.
 .“The firste moevere of the cause above
 Whan he first made the faire cheyne of love,
 Greet was theeffect, and heigh was his entente;
 Wel wiste he, why, and what therof he mente, 2990
 For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
 The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond,
 In certeyn boundes that they may nat flee.
 That same prince and that same moevere,” quod he,
 “Hath stablissed in this wrecched world adoun 2995
 Certeyne dayes and duracioun
 To al that is engendred in this place,
 Over the whiche day they may nat pace;
 Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge,
 Ther nedeth noght noon auctoritee allegge, 3000
 For it is preeved by experience—
 But that me list declaren my sentence.
 Thanne may men by this ordre wel discerne
 That thilke moevere stable is and eterne.
 Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool, 3005
 That every part deryveth from his hool;
 For nature hath nat taken his bigynnyng
 Of no partie nor cantel of a thyng,
 But of a thyng that parfit is and stable,
 Descendynge so til it be corruptable; 3010
 And therefore, of his wise purveiaunce,
 He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,
 That speces of thynges and progressiouns
 Shullen enduren by successiouns,
 And nat eterne, withouten any lye. 3015
 This maystow understonde and seen at eye.
 Lo the ook, that hath so long a norisshynge
 From tyme that it first bigynneth sprynge,

And hath so long a lif, as we may see,
 Yet at the laste wasted is the tree. 3020
 Considereth eek, how that the harde stoon
 Under oure feet, on which we trede and goon,
 Yit wasteth it, as it lyth by the weye.
 The brode ryver somtyme wexeth dreye,
 The grete toures se we wane and wende, 3025
 Thanne may ye se that al this thyng hath ende.
 Of man and womman seen we wel also,
 That nedeth, in oon of thise termes two,
 This is to seyn, in youthe or elles age,
 He moot be deed, the kyng as shal a page. 3030
 Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
 Som in the large feeld, as men may se;
 Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilke weye,
 Thanne may I seyn that al this thyng moot deye.
 What maketh this, but Juppiter the kyng, 3035
 That is prince and cause of alle thyng
 Converting al unto his propre welle
 From which it is deryved, sooth to telle,
 And heer agayns no creature on lyve
 Of no degree availleth for to stryve. 3040
 Thanne is it wysdom, as it thynketh me,
 To maken vertu of necessitee,
 And take it weel, that we may nat eschue;
 And namely, that to us alle is due.
 And who so gruccheth ought, he dooth folye, 3045
 And rebel is to hym that al may gye.
 And certainly, a man hath moost honour
 To dyen in his excellence and flour,
 Whan he is siker of his goode name,
 Thanne hath he doon his freend ne hym no shame. 3050
 And gladder oghte his freend been of his deeth,
 Whan with honour upyolden is his breeth,
 Than whan his name apalled is for age;

For al forgeten is his vassellage.

Thanne is it best as for a worthy fame, 3055

To dyen whan that he is best of name.

The contrarie of al this is wilfulnesse:

Why grucchen heere his cosyn and his wyf

That goode Arcite, of chivalrie flour,

Departed is with duetee and honour 3060

Out of this foule prisoun of this lyf?

Why grucchen heere his cosyn and his wyf

Of his welfare, that loved hem so weel?

Kan he hem thank? Nay, God woot never a deel!

That bothe his soule and eek himself offende, 3065

And yet they mowe hir lustes nat amende.

What may I concluden of this longe serye,

But after wo I rede us to be merye,

And thanken Juppiter of al his grace?

And er that we departen from this place 3070

I rede that we make, of sorwes two,

O parfit joye lastyng everemo.

And looketh now, wher moost sorwe is her inne,

Ther wol we first amenden and bigynne.

"Suster," quod he, "this is my fulle assent, 3075

With all thavys heere of my parlement,

That gentil Palamon thyn owene kynght,

That serveth yow with wille, herte, and myght,

And evere hath doon, syn that ye first hym knewe,

That ye shul of your grace upon hym rewe, 3080

And taken hym for housbonde and for lord.

Lene me youre hond, for this is oure accord.

Lat se now of youre wommanly pitee;

He is a kynges brother sone, pardee,

And though he were a povre bacheler, 3085

Syn he hath served yow so many a yeer,

And had for yow so greet adversitee,

It moste been considered, leeveth me,

For gentil mercy oghte to passen right."
 Thanne seyde he thus to Palamon ful right: 3090
 "I trowe ther nedeth litel sermonyng
 To make yow assente to this thyng.
 Com neer, and taak youre lady by the hond."
 Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond
 That highte matrimoigne, or mariage, 3095
 By al the conseil and the baronage.
 And thus with alle blisse and melodye
 Hath Palamon ywedded Emelye;
 And God, that al this wyde world hath wrought,
 Sende hym his love that hath it deere aboght! 3100
 For now is Palamon in alle wele,
 Lyvyng in blisse, in richesse, and in heele,
 And Emelye hym loveth so tendrely,
 And he hir serveth al so gentilly,
 That nevere was ther no word hem bitwene, 3105
 Of jalousie, or any oother teene.
 Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye,
 And God save al this faire compaignye!—Amen—

Heere is ended the knyghtes tale.

3100 *hath om.* 3104 *al om.*

PROLOGUE TO THE MILLERES TALE

Heere folwen the wordes bitwene the Hoost and the Millere

Whan that the Knyght had thus his tale ytoold,
In al the route ne was ther yong ne oold 3110
That he ne seyde it was a noble storie,
And worthy for to drawn to memorie;
And namely the gentils everichon.
Oure Hooste lough, and swoor, "So moot I gon,
This gooth aright, unboked is the male, 3115
Lat se now who shal telle another tale,
For trewely the game is wel bigonne.
Now telleth on, sir Monk, if that ye konne
Somwhat to quite with the Knyghtes tale."
The Miller that for-dronken was al pale, 3120
So that unnethe upon his hors he sat,
He nolde avalen neither hood ne hat,
Ne abyde no man for his curteisie,
But in Pilates voys he gan to crie,
And swoor by armes and by blood and bones, 3125
"I kan a noble tale for the nones,
With which I wol now quite the Knyghtes tale."
Oure Hooste saugh that he was dronke of ale,
And seyde, "Abyd, Robyn, my leeve brother,
Som bettre man shal telle us first another, 3130
Abyde, and lat us werken thriftily."
"By Goddes soule," quod he, "that wol nat I,
For I wol speke, or elles go my wey."
Oure Hoost answerde, "Tel on, a devele wey!
Thou art a fool, thy wit is overcome! 3135

"Now herkneth," quod the Miller, "alle and some,
 But first I make a protestacioun
 That I am dronke, I knowe it by my soun;
 And therfore, if that I mysspeke or seye,
 Wyte it the ale of Southwerk I you preye. 3140
 For I wol telle a legende and a lyf
 Bothe of a carpenter and of his wyf,
 How that a clerk hath set the wrightes cappe."
 The Reve answerde and seyde, "Stynt thy clappe,
 Lat be thy lewed dronken harlotrye, 3145
 It is a synne and eek a greet folye
 To apeyren any man or hym defame,
 And eek to bryngen wyves in swich fame;
 Thou mayst ynogh of othere thynges seyn."
 This dronke Miller spak ful soone ageyn, 3150
 And seyde, "Leve brother Osewold,
 Who hath no wyf, he is no cokewold.
 But I sey nat therfore that thou art oon,
 Ther been ful goode wyves many oon,
 And evere a thousand goode ayeyns oon badde; 3155
 That knowestow wel thyself, but if thou madde.
 Why artow angry with my tale now?
 I have a wyf, pardee, as wel as thow,
 Yet nolde I for the oxen in my plogh
 Take upon me moore than ynogh, 3160
 As demen of myself that I were oon;
 I wol bileve wel, that I am noon.
 An housbonde shal nat been inquisityf
 Of Goddes pryvetee, nor of his wyf.
 So he may fynde Goddes foyssoun there, 3165
 Of the remenant nedeth nat enquere."
 What sholde I moore seyn, but this Miller
 He nolde his wordes for no man forbere,
 But tolde his cherles tale in his manere;
 Me thynketh that I shal reherce it heere. 3170

And therfore every gentil wight I preye,
 For Goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
 Of yvel entente, but that I moot reherce
 Hir tales alle, be they bettre or werse,
 Or elles falsen som of my mateere. 3175
 And therfore who-so list it nat yheere,
 Turne over the leef, and chese another tale;
 For he shal fynde ynowe, grete and smale,
 Of storial thyng that toucheth gentillesse,
 And eek moralitee, and hoolynesse. 3180
 Blameth nat me if that ye chese amys;
 The Miller is a cherl, ye knowe wel this,
 So was the Reve, and othere manye mo,
 And harlotrie they tolden bothe two.
 Avyseth yow, and put me out of blame, 3185
 And eek men shal nat maken ernest of game.
 3184 putteth.

THE TALE.

[One John, a rich and credulous carpenter of Oxford, is
 beguiled by his wife Alison, through Nicholas, a poor
 scholar boarding with them. Absolon, the parish clerk, is
 slighted by Alison; but wreaks vengeance on Nicholas.]

PROLOGUE TO THE REVES TALE

The prologe of the Reves Tale.

Whan folk hadde laughen at this nyce cas 3855
Of Absolon and hende Nicholas,
Diverse folk diversely they seyde,
But for the moore part they loughed and pleyde,
Ne at this tale I saugh no man hym greve,
But it were oonly Osewold the Reve; 3860
Bycause he was of carpenteres craft,
A litel ire is in his herte ylaft;
He gan to grucche, and blamed it a lite.
"So theek," quod he, "ful wel koude I yow quite,
With bleryng of a proud milleres eye, 3865
If that me liste speke of ribaudye.
But ik am oold, me list no pley for age,
Gras-tyme is doon, my fodder is now forage,
This white top writeth myne olde yeris,
Myn herte is also mowled as myne heris, 3870
But if I fare as dooth an openers;
That ilke fruyt is ever leng the wers,
Til it be roten in mullok or in stree.
We olde men, I drede, so fare we,
Til we be roten kan we nat be rype. 3875
We hoppen ay whil that the world wol pype,
For in oure wyl ther stiketh evere a nayl
To have an hoor heed and a grene tayl,
As hath a leek, for thogh oure myght be goon,
Oure wyl desireth folie evere in oon. 3880
For whan we may nat doon, than wol we speke,
Yet in oure asshen olde is fyr yreke.
Foure gleedes han we whiche I shal devyse,
Avauntynge, liyng, anger, coveitise;

3870 mowled also.

Thise foure sparkles longen unto eelde. 3885
 Oure olde lemes mowe wel been unweelde,
 But wyl ne shal nat faillen, that is sooth.
 And yet ik have alwey a coltes tooth,
 As many a yeer as it is passed henne
 Syn that my tappe of lif bigan to renne. 3890
 For sikerly whan I was bore, anon
 Deeth drough the tappe of lyf, and leet it gon,
 And ever sithe hath so the tappe yronne,
 Til that almoost al empty is the tonne.
 The stream of lyf now droppeth on the chymbe; 3895
 The sely tonge may wel rynge and chymbe
 Of wrecchednesse that passed is ful yoore.
 With olde folk, save dotage, is namoore."

Whan that oure Hoost hadde herd this sermonyng,
 He gan to speke as lordly as a kyng, 3900
 He seide, "What amounteth al this wit?
 What shul we speke alday of hooly writ?
 The devel made a reve for to preche,
 And of a soutere, shipman, or a leche.
 Sey forth thy tale, and tarie nat the tyme. 3905
 Lo Depeford, and it is half-wey pryme;
 Lo, Grenewych, ther many a shrewe is inne;
 It were al tyme thy tale to bigynne."

"Now sires," quod this Osewold the Reve,
 "I pray yow alle, that ye nat yow greve, 3910
 Thogh I answeere, and somdeel sette his howve,
 For leveful is with force force of-showve.

This dronke Millere hath ytoold us heer,
 How that bigyled was a Carpenter,
 Peraventure in scorn, for I am oon; 3915
 And by youre leve I shal hym quite anoon.
 Right in his cherles termes wol I speke,
 I pray to God his nekke mote breke!
 He kan wel in myn eye seen a stalke,
 But in his owene he kan nat seen a balke." 3920

THE TALE.

[Simkin, a rich thieving miller of Trumpington Mill, near Cambridge, is well served by two Cambridge clerks of the north country, who beguile his wife and daughter, recover the stolen meal which he had hid, and leave him well beaten.]

THE PROLOGUE TO THE COKES TALE.

The prologe of the Cokes Tale.

The Cook of London, whil the Reve spak, 4325
For joye him thoughte, he clawed him on the bak.
“Ha! ha!” quod he, “for Cristes passioun,
This miller hadde a sharp conclusioun
Upon his argument of herbergage.
Wel seyde Salomon in his langage, 4330
‘Ne brynge nat every man into thyn hous,’
For herberwyng by nyghte is perilous.
Wel oghte a man avysed for to be,
Whom that be broghte into his pryvetee.
I pray to God so yeve me sorwe and care, 4335
If evere sitthe I highte Hogge of Ware,
Herde I a millere bettre yset awerk.
He hadde a jape of malice in the derk.
But God forbede that we stynte heere,
And therfore, if ye vouche-sauf to heere 4340
A tale of me that am a povre man,
I wol yow telle, as wel as evere I kan,
A litel jape that fil in oure citee.”
Oure Hoost answerde and seide, “I graunte it thee,
Now telle on, Roger, looke that it be good, 4345
For many a pastee hastow laten blood,
And many a Jakke of Doveere hastow soold
That hath been twies hoot and twies cold.
Of many a pilgrim hastow Cristes curs,
For of thy percely yet they fare the wors, 4350
That they han eten with thy stubbel-goos,
For in thy shoppe is many a flye loos.

Now telle on, gentil Roger, by thy name,
 But yet I pray thee, be nat wroth for game,
 A man may seye ful sooth in game and pley." 4355
 "Thou seist ful sooth," quod Roger, "by my fey;
 But 'sooth pley quaad pley,' as the Flemyng seith.
 And ther-fore, Herry Bailly, by thy feith,
 Be thou nat wrooth, er we departen heer,
 Though that my tale be of an hostileer. 4360
 But nathelees I wol nat telle it yit,
 But er we parte, ywis, thou shalt be quit."
 And ther-with-al he lough and made cheere,
 And seyde his tale, as ye shul after heere.

4359 na.

THE TALE (Unfinished).

[Perkin, a London apprentice, being dismissed by his master, seeks his companions in dice, revel and disport.]

GROUP B.

PROLOGUE OF THE MAN OF LAWE.

The wordes of the Hoost to the compaignye.

Oure Hooste saugh wel that the brighte sonne
The ark of his artificial day hath ronne
The ferthe part, and half an houre and moore;
And though he were nat depe expert in loore,
He wiste it was the eightetethe day 5
Of Aprill, that is messenger to May;
And saugh wel, that the shadwe of every tree
Was as in lengthe the same quantitee
That was the body erect that caused it,
And therfore by the shadwe he took his wit 10
That Phebus, which that shoon so clere and brighte,
Degrees was fyve and forty clombe on highte;
And for that day, as in that latitude,
It was ten at the klokke, he gan conclude,
And sodeynly he plighte his hors aboute.— 15
“Lordynges,” quod he, “I warne yow, al this route,
The fourthe party of this day is gon.
Now for the love of God and of Seint John,
Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye may.
Lordynges, the tyme wasteth nyght and day, 20
And steleth from us, what pryvely slepynge,
And what thurgh necligence in oure wakyng,
As dooth the stream, that turneth nevere agayn,
Descendyng fro the montaigne into playn.

1 hoost. 4 expert ystert. 5 eighte and twentithe.

Wel kan Senec and many a philosophre 25
 Biwailen tyme, moore than gold in cofre.
 'For losse of catel may recovered be,
 But losse of tyme shendeth us,' quod he.
 It wol nat come agayn, withouten drede,
 Namooore than wole Malkynes maydenhede, 30
 Whan she hath lost it in hir wantownesse.
 Lat us nat mowlen thus in ydelnesse;
 Sir man of lawe," quod he, "so have ye blis,
 Telle us a tale anon, as forward is.
 Ye been submytted thurgh youre free assent 35
 To stonden in this cas at my juggement.
 Acquiteth yow as now of youre biheeste,
 Thanne have ye do youre devoir atte leeste."
 "Hooste," quod he, "depardieux ich assente,
 To breke forward is nat myn entente. 40
 Biheste is dette, and I wole holde fayn
 Al my biheste, I kan no better sayn.
 For swich lawe as a man yeveth another wight,
 He sholde hymselfen usen it by right;
 Thus wole oure text, but nathelees certeyn 45
 I kan right now no thrifty tale seyn;
 But Chaucer, thogh he kan but lewedly
 On metres and on rymyng craftily,
 Hath seyde hem in swich Englissh as he kan,
 Of olde tyme, as knoweth many a man. 50
 And if he have noght seyde hem, leve brother,
 In o book, he hath seyde hem in another.
 For he hath toold of loveris up and doun
 Mo than Ovide made of mencioun,
 In hise Epistles that been ful olde; 55
 What sholde I tellen hem, syn they ben tolde?
 In youthe he made of Ceys and Alcione,
 And sitthen hath he spoken of everichone
 Thise noble wyves and thise loveris eke.

Whoso that wole his large volume seke 60
 Cleped the Seintes Legende of Cupide,
 Ther may he seen the large woundes wyde
 Of Lucesse, and of Babilan Tesbee,
 The swerd of Dido for the false Enee,
 The tree of Phillis for hir Demophon, 65
 The pleinte of Dianire and Hermyon,
 Of Adriane and of Isiphilee,
 The bareyne yle stondyng in the see,
 The dreynte Leandre for his Erro,
 The teeris of Eleyne, and eek the wo 70
 Of Brixseyde, and of the, Ladomea,
 The crueltee of the, queene Medea,
 Thy litel children hangyng by the hals
 For thy Jason, that was in love so fals.
 O Ypermystra, Penolopee, Alceste, 75
 Youre wyfhede he comendeth with the beste!
 But certainly no word ne writeth he
 Of thilke wikke ensample of Canacee,
 That loved hir owene brother synfully—
 Of swiche cursed stories I sey fy!— 80
 Or ellis of Tyro Appollonius,
 How that the cursed kyng Antiochus
 Birafted his doghter of hir maydenhede,
 That is so horrible a tale for to rede,
 Whan he hir threw upon the pavement. 85
 And therfore he, of ful avysement,
 Nolde nevere write, in none of his sermons,
 Of swiche unkynde abhomynaciouns;
 Ne I wol noon reherce, if that I may.
 But of my tale how shall I doon this day? 90
 Me were looth be likned, doutelees,
 To Muses that men clepe Pierides—
 Methamorphosios woot what I mene—
 But nathelees, I recche noght a bene

Though I come after hym with hawebake,
I speke in prose, and lat him rymes make."
And with that word he, with a sobre cheere,
Bigan his tale, as ye shal after heere.

THE TALE OF THE MAN OF LAWE.

The Prologue of the Mannes Tale of Lawe.

O hateful harm, condicion of poverté!
With thurst, with coold, with hunger so confoundid! 100
To asken help thee shameth in thyn herte,
If thou noon aske, so soore artow ywoundid
That verray nede unwrappeth al thy wounde hid;
Maugree thyn heed thou most for indigence
Or stele, or begge, or borwe thy despençe! 105

Thow blamest Crist, and seist ful bitterly
He mysdeparteth richesse temporal.
Thy neighebore thou wytest synfully,
And seist thou hast to lite and he hath al.
“Parfay!” seistow, “somtyme he rekene shal, 110
Whan that his tayl shal brennen in the gleede,
For he noght helpeth needfulle in bir neede.”

Herkne what is the sentence of the wise,
“Bet is to dyen than have indigence.”
Thy selve neighebor wol thee despise, 115
If thou be povre, farwel thy reverence!
Yet of the wise man take this sentence,
“Alle dayes of povre men been wikke;”
Be war therfore, er thou come to that prikke.

If thou be povre, thy brother hateth thee, 120
And alle thy freendes fleen from thee; allas,
O riche marchauntz, ful of wele been yee!
O noble, o prudent folk, as in this cas!
Youre bagges been nat fild with ambes as,
But with sys cynk, that renneth for youre chaunce, 125
At Cristemasse myrie may ye daunce!

Ye seken lond and see for your wynnynge,
 As wise folk ye knowen all thestaat
 Of regnes; ye been fadres of tydynges
 And tales, bothe of pees and of debaat. 130
 I were right now of tales desolaat
 Nere that a marchant, goon is many a yeere,
 Me taughte a tale, which that ye shal heere.

Heere begynneth the Man of Lawe his Tale.

In Surrye whilom dwelte a compaignye
 Of chapmen riche, and therto sadde and trewe, 135
 That wyde-where senten hir spicerye,
 Clothes of gold, and satyns riche of hewe.
 Hir chaffare was so thrifty and so newe
 That every wight hath deyntee to chaffare
 With hem, and eek to sellen hem hir ware. 140

Now fil it, that the maistres of that sort
 Han shapen hem to Rome for to wende;
 Were it for chapmanhode, or for disport,
 Noon oother message wolde they thider sende,
 But comen hemself to Rome, this is the ende, 145
 And in swich place as thoughte hem advantage
 For hir entente, they take hir herbergage.

Sojourned han thise Marchantz in that toun
 A certein tyme, as fil to hire plesance.
 And so bifel, that the excellent renoun 150
 Of the Emperoures doghter, Dame Custance,
 Reported was, with every circumstance
 Unto thise Surryen marchantz in swich wyse
 Fro day to day, as I shal yow devyse.

This was the commune voys of every man: 155

"Oure Emperour of Rome, God hym see,
A doghter hath, that syn the world bigan,
To rekene as wel hir goodnesse as beautee,
Nas nevere swich another as is shee.
I prey to God in honour hir sustene 160
And wolde she were of all Europe the queene!

In hir is heigh beautee, withoute pride,
Yowthe, withoute grenhede or folye,
To alle hir werkes vertu is hir gyde,
Humblesse hath slayn in hir al tirannye, 165
She is mirour of alle curteisye,
Hir herte is verray chambre of hoolynesse,
Hir hand ministre of fredam for almesse."

And al this voys was sooth, as God is trewe!
But now to purpos, lat us turne agayn; 170
Thise marchantz han doon fraught hir shippes newe,
And whan they han this blisful mayden sayn,
Hoom to Surrye been they went ful fayn,
And doon hir nedes as they han doon yoore,
And lyven in wele, I kan sey yow namoore. 175

Now fil it, that thise marchantz stode in grace
Of hym, that was the Sowdan of Surrye.
For whan they cam from any strange place,
He wolde, of his benigne curteisye,
Make hem good chiere, and bisily espye 180
Tidynges of sondry regnes, for to leere
The wondres that they myghte seen or heere.

Amonges othere thynges, specially
Thise marchantz han hym toold of dame Custance
So greet noblesse, in ernest ceriously, 185
That this Sowdan hath caught so greet plesance

To han hir figure in his remembrance,
 That all his lust and al his bisy cure
 Was for to love hir, while his lyf may dure.

Paraventure in thilke large book, 190
 Which that men clipe the hevene, ywriten was
 With sterres, whan that he his birthe took,
 That he for love sholde han his deeth, alas !
 For in the sterres clerer than is glas
 Is writen, God woot, whoso koude it rede, 195
 The deeth of every man, withouten drede.

In sterres many a wynter therbiforn
 Was writen the deeth of Ector, Achilles,
 Of Pompei, Julius, er they were born,
 The strif of Thebes, and of Ercules, 200
 Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
 The deeth, but mennes wittes ben so dulle
 That no wight kan wel rede it atte fulle.

This Sowdan for his privee conseil sente,
 And, shortly of this matiere for to pace, 205
 He hath to hem declared his entente
 And seyde hem, certein, but he myghte have grace
 To han Custance withinne a litel space,
 He nas but deed; and charged hem in hye
 To shapen for his lyf som remedye. 210

Diverse men diverse thynges seyden;
 They argumenten, casten up and doun,
 Many a subtil resoun forth they leyden,
 They speken of magyk and abusioun;
 But finally, as in conclusioun, 215
 They kan nat seen in that noon advantage,
 Ne in noon oother wey, save mariage.

Thanne sawe they therin swich difficultee
 By wey of reson, for to speke al playn
 Bycause that ther was swich diversitee 220
 Bitwene hir bothe lawes, that they sayn
 They trowe that "no cristene prince wolde fayn
 Wedden his child under oure lawes swete
 That us were taught by Mahoun oure prophete."

And he answerde: "Rather than I lese 225
 Custance, I wol be cristned, doutelees.
 I moot been hires, I may noon oother chese;
 I prey yow, hoold youre argumentz in pees.
 Saveth my lyf, and beth noght recchelees
 To geten hir that hath my lyf in cure, 230
 For in this wo I may nat longe endure."

What nedeth gretter dilatacioun?
 I seye, by tretys and embassadrye
 And by the popes mediacioun,
 And al the chirche and al the chivalrie, 235
 That in destruccioun of Mawmettrie
 And in encrees of Cristes lawe deere,
 They been acorded, so as ye shal heere,

How that the Sowdan and his baronage
 And alle hise liges sholde ycristned be— 240
 And he shal han Custance in mariage,
 And certein gold, I noot what quantitee,
 And heerto founden suffisant suretee,
 This same accord was sworn on eyther syde.
 Now, faire Custance, almyghty God thee gyde! 245

Now wolde som men waiten, as I gesse,
 That I sholde tellen al the purveiance
 That themperour, of his grete noblesse,

Hath shapen for his doghter dame Custance;
 Wel may men knowen that so greet ordinance 250
 May no man tellen in a litel clause
 As was arrayed for so heigh a cause.

Bisshopes been shapen with hir for to wende,
 Lordes, ladies, knyghtes of renoun,
 And oother folk ynogh, this is the ende, 255
 And notified is, thurghout the toun,
 That every wight with greet devocioun
 Sholde preyen Crist, that he this mariage
 Receyve in gree, and spede this viage.

The day is comen of hir departynge, 260
 I seye, the woful day fatal is come,
 That ther may be no lenger tariynge,
 But forthward they hem dressen, alle and some.
 Custance, that was with sorwe al overcome,
 Ful pale arist, and dresseth hir to wende, 265
 For wel she seeth ther is noon oother ende.

Allas, what wonder is it thogh she wepte,
 That shal be sent to strange nacioun
 Fro freendes that so tendrely hir kepte,
 And to be bounden under subjeccioun 270
 Of oon, she knoweth nat his condicioun?
 Housbondes been alle goode, and han ben yoore,
 That knowen wyves! I dar sey yow namoore.

"Fader," she seyde, "thy wrecched child Custance,
 Thy yonge doghter, fostred up so softe, 275
 And ye my mooder, my soverayn plesance,
 Over alle thyng, out-taken Crist on-lofte,
 Custance, youre child, hir recomandeth ofte
 Unto your grace, for I shal to Surrye
 Ne shal I nevere seen yow moore with eye. 280

255 thende.

Allas! unto the barbre nacioun
 I moste goon, syn that it is youre wille,
 But Crist, that starf for our savacioun,
 So yeve me grace hise heestes to fulfille,—
 I, wrecche womman, no fors though I spille. 285
 Wommen are born to thraldom and penance,
 And to been under mannes governance.”

I trowe, at Troye whan Pirrus brak the wal,
 Or Ilion brende, ne at Thebes the Citee,
 Ne at Rome for the harm thurgh Hanybal 290
 That Romyans hath venquysshed tymes thre,
 Nas herd swich tendre wepyng for pitee
 As in the chambre was, for hir departyng;
 But forth she moot, wher-so she wepe or synge.

O firste moevyng crueel firmanent, 295
 With thy diurnal sweigh, that crowdest ay
 And hurlest al from Est til Occident
 That naturelly wolde holde another way,
 Thy crowdyng set the hevene in swich array
 At the bigynnyng of this fiers viage, 300
 That crueel Mars hath slayn this mariage.

Infortunat ascendent tortuous,
 Of which the lord is helplees falle, alas!
 Out of his angle into the derkeste hous.
 O Mars! O Atazir! as in this cas, 305
 O fieble Moone, unhappy been thy paas!
 Thou knytttest thee, ther thou art nat receyved;
 Ther thou were weel, fro thennes artow weyved.—

Imprudent Emperour of Rome, alas!
 Was ther no philosophre in al thy toun? 310
 Is no tyme bet than oother in swich cas?

Of viage is ther noon eleccioun,
 Namely to folk of heigh condicioun,
 Noght whan a roote is of a burthe yknowe?
 Allas, we been to lewed or to slowe! 315

To ship is brought this woful faire mayde
 Solempnely, with every circumstance,
 "Now Jesu Crist be with yow alle," she seyde.
 Ther nys namoore but, "Farewel faire Custance!"
 She peyneth hir to make good contenance, 320
 And forth I lete hir saille in this manere,
 And turne I wole agayn to my matere.

The mooder of the Sowdan, welles of vyices,
 Espied hath hir sones pleyne entente,
 How he wol lete hise olde sacrifices, 325
 And right anon she for hir conseil sente,
 And they been come, to knowe what she mente,
 And whan assembled was this folk in feere,
 She sette hir down, and seyde as ye shal heere.

"Lordes," quod she, "ye knowen everichon, 330
 How that my sone in point is for to lete
 The hooly lawes of oure Alkaron,
 Yeven by Goddes message, Makomete.
 But oon avow to grete God I heete,
 The lyf shal rather out of my body sterte, 335
 Than Makometes lawe out of myn herte!

What sholde us tyden of this newe lawe
 But thraldom to our bodies, and penance,
 And afterward in helle to be drawe
 For we reneyed Mahoun oure creance? 340
 But lordes, wol ye maken assurance
 As I shal seyn, assentyng to my loore,
 And I shal make us sauf for everemoore."

They sworn and assenten every man
 To lyve with hir, and dye, and by hir stonde, 345
 And everich in the beste wise he kan
 To strengthen hir shal alle hise frendes fonde,
 And she hath this emprise ytake on honde,
 Which ye shal heren, that I shal devyse.
 And to hem alle she spak right in this wyse: 350

"We shul first feyne us cristendom to take,—
 Coold water shal nat greve us but a lite—
 And I shal swich a feeste and revel make,
 That as I trowe I shal the Sowdan quite;
 For thogh his wyf be cristned never so white, 355
 She shal have nede to wasshe away the rede,
 Thogh she a fontful water with hir lede!"

O Sowdanesse, roote of iniquitee!
 Virago, thou Semyrame the secounde!
 O serpent under femynynytee, 360
 Lik to the serpent depe in helle ybounde!
 O feyned womman, al that may confounde
 Vertu and innocence thurgh thy malice
 Is bred in thee, as nest of every vice!

O Sathan, envious syn thilke day 365
 That thou were chaced from oure heritage,
 Wel knowestow to wommen the olde way!
 Thou madest Eva brynge us in servage;
 Thou wolt fordoon this cristen mariage.
 Thyn instrument, so weylawey the while! 370
 Makestow of wommen, whan thou wolt bigile!

This Sowdanesse, whom I thus blame and warie,
 Leet prively hir conseil goon hir way.
 What sholde I in this tale lenger tarie?
 She rydeth to the Sowdan on a day 375

And seyde hym, that she wolde reneye hir lay,
 And cristendom of preestes handes fonge,
 Repentyng hir she hethen was so longe;

Bisechyng hym to doon hir that honour
 That she moste han the cristen folk to feeste. 380
 "To plesen hem I wol do my labour."
 The Sowdan seith, "I wol doon at youre heeste,"
 And knelyng thanketh hir of that requeste.
 So glad he was, he nyste what to seye;
 She kiste hir sone, and hoome she gooth hir weye. 385

Explicit prima pars.

Sequitur pars secunda.

Arryved been this cristen folk to londe,
 In Surrye, with a greet solempne route,
 And hastifliche this Sowdan sente his sonde
 First to his mooder and all the regne aboute,
 And seyde his wyf was comen, oute of doute, 390
 And preyde hir for to ryde agayn the queene,
 The honour of his regne to susteene.

Greet was the prees, and riche was tharray
 Of Surryens and Romayns met yfeere;
 The mooder of the Sowdan, riche and gay, 395
 Receyveth hir with also glad a cheere
 As any mooder myghte hir doghter deere,
 And to the nexte citee ther bisyde
 A softe paas solempnely they ryde.

Noght trowe I the triumphe of Julius, 400
 Of which that Lucan maketh swich a boost,
 Was roialler, ne moore curius
 Than was thassemblee of this blisful hoost.

But this scorioun, this wikked goost,
 The Sowdanesse, for all hir flaterynge 405
 Caste under this ful mortally to styng.

The Sowdan comth hymself soone after this
 So roially, that wonder is to telle,
 And welcometh hir with alle joye and blis,
 And thus in murthe and joye I lete hem dwelle— 410
 The fruyt of this matiere is that I telle.—
 Whan tyme cam, men thoughte it for the beste,
 The revel stynte, and men goon to hir reste.

The tyme cam, this olde Sowdanesse
 Ordeyned hath this feeste of which I tolde, 415
 And to the feeste cristen folk hem dresse
 In general, ye, bothe yonge and olde.
 Heere may men feeste and roialtee biholde,
 And deyntees mo than I kan yow devyse;
 But al to deere they boghte it er they ryse! 420

O sodeyn wo, that evere art successour
 To worldly blisse, spreynd with bitternesse!
 The ende of the joye of oure worldly labour!
 Wo occupieth the fyn of oure gladnesse!
 Herke this conseil for thy sikernesse, 425
 Upon thy glade day have in thy minde
 The unwar wo or harm that comth bihynde.

For shortly for to tellen at o word,
 The Sowdan and the cristen everichone
 Been al tohewe and stiked at the bord, 430
 But it were oonly dame Custance allone.
 This olde Sowdanesse, cursed krone,
 Hath with hir freendes doon this cursed dede,
 For she herself wolde all the contree lede.

Ne was ther Surryen noon, that was converted, 435
 That of the conseil of the Sowdan woot,
 That he nas al tohewe er he asterted.
 And Custance han they take anon foot-hoot
 And in a ship all steerelees, God woot,
 They han hir set, and biddeth hir lerne saille 440
 Out of Surrye agaynward to Ytaille.

A certein tresor that she thider ladde,
 And, sooth to seyn, vitaille greet plentee
 They han hir yeven, and clothes eek she hadde,
 And forth she sailleth in the salte see. 445
 O my Custance, ful of benignytee,
 O emperoures yonge doghter deere,
 He that is lord of Fortune be thy steere!

She blesseth hir, and with ful pitous voys
 Unto the croys of Crist thus seyde she, 450
 "O cleere, o welful auter, hooly croys,
 Reed of the lambes blood, ful of pitee,
 That wesshe the world fro the olde iniquitee,
 Me fro the feend and fro his clawes kepe,
 That day that I shal drenchen in the depe. 455

Victorious tree, proteccioun of trewe,
 That oonly worthy were for to bere
 The kyng of hevene with his woundes newe,
 The white lamb that hurt was with the spere,
 Flemer of feendes out of hym and here 460
 On which thy lymes feithfully extenden,
 Me keep, and yif me myght my lyf tamenden."

Yeres and dayes fleteth this creature
 Thurghout the See of Grece unto the Strayte
 Of Marrok, as it was hir aventure. 465

435 *ther om.* 442 *thider* with *hir*. 447 *emperours*. 451 *welful* woful.
 462 *keep* helpe.

On many a sory meel now may she bayte;
 After hir deeth ful often may she wayte,
 Er that the wilde wawes wol hire dryve
 Unto the place ther she shal arryve.

Men myghten asken why she was nat slayn? 470
 Eek at the feeste who myghte hir body save?
 And I answeere to that demande agayn,
 Who saved Danyel in the horrible cave,
 Ther every wight save he, maister and knave,
 Was with the leoun frete, er he asterte? 475
 No wight but God, that he bar in his herte.

God liste to shewe his wonderful myracle
 In hir, for we sholde seen his myghty werkis.
 Crist, which that is to every harm triacle,
 By certeine meenes ofte, as knowen clerkis, 480
 Dooth thyng for certein ende, that ful derk is
 To mannes wit, that for oure ignorance
 Ne konne noght knowe his prudent purveiance.

Now, sith she was nat at the feeste yslawe,
 Who kepte hir fro the drenchyng in the see? 485
 Wh kepte Jonas in the fisshes mawe
 Til he was spouted up at Nynyvee?
 Wel may men knowe it was no wight but he
 That kepte peple Ebrayk from hir drenchyng,
 With drye feet thurghout the see passyng. 490

Who bad the foure spirites of tempest,
 That power han tanoyen lond and see,
 "Bothe north and south, and also west and est,
 Anoyeth neither see, ne land, ne tree?"
 Soothly, the comandour of that was he, 495
 That fro the tempest ay this womman kepte,
 As wel eek when she wook as whan she slepte.

Where myghte this womman mete and drynke have?
 Thre yeer and moore how lasteth hir vitaille?
 Who fedde the Egypcien Marie in the cave, 500
 Or in desert? no wight but Crist sanz faille.
 Fyve thousand folk it was as greet mervaille
 With loves fyve and fisses two to feede;
 God sente his foyson at hir grete neede.

She dryveth forth into oure occian 505
 Thurghout oure wilde see, til atte laste
 Under an hoold that nempnen I ne kan,
 Fer in Northhumberlond, the wawe hir caste,
 And in the sond hir ship stiked so faste
 That thennes wolde it noight of al a tyde, 510
 The wyl of Crist was that she sholde abyde.

The constable of the castel doun is fare
 To seen his wrak, and al the ship he soghte,
 And foond this very womman ful of care,
 He foond also the tresor that she broghte, 515
 In hir langage mercy she bisoghte,
 The lyf out of hire body for to twynne,
 Hir to deliver of wo that she was inne.

A maner Latyn corrupt was hir speche,
 But algates ther-by was she understonde. 520
 The constable, whan hym lyst no lenger seche,
 This woful womman broghte he to the londe.
 She kneleth doun and thanketh Goddes sonde;
 But what she was, she wolde no man seye,
 For foul ne fair, thogh that she sholde deye. 525

She seyde, she was so mazed in the see
 That she forgat hir mynde, by hir trouthe.
 The constable hath of hir so greet pitee,
 And eke his wyf, that they wepen for routhe.

She was so diligent withouten slouthe 530
 To serve and plesen everich in that place,
 That alle hir loven that looken on hir face.

This constable and dame Hermengyld his wyf
 Were payens, and that contree every-where;
 But Hermengyld loved hir right as hir lyf, 535
 And Custance hath so longe sojourned there
 In orisons with many a bitter teere,
 Til Jesu hath converted thurgh his grace
 Dame Hermengyld, constablesse of that place.

In al that lond no cristen dorste route, 540
 Alle cristen folk been fled fro that contree
 Thurgh payens that conquereden al aboute
 The plagis of the North by land and see.
 To Walys fledde the Cristyanytee
 Of olde Britons, dwellynge in this Ile; 545
 Ther was hir refut for the meene-while.

But yet nere cristene Britons so exiled
 That ther nere somme that in hir privetee
 Honoured Crist, and hethen folk bigiled,
 And ny the castel swiche ther dwelten three; 550
 That oon of hem was blynd, and myghte nat see,
 But it were with thilke eyen of his mynde,
 With whiche men seen, after that they ben blynde.

Bright was the sonne as in that someres day,
 For which the constable and his wyf also 555
 And Custance han ytake the righte way
 Toward the see, a furlong wey or two,
 To playen, and to romen, to and fro,
 And in hir walk this blynde man they mette,
 Croked and oold, with eyen faste yshette. 560

"In name of Crist," cride this olde Britoun,
 "Dame Hermengyld, yif me my sighte agayn."
 This lady weex affrayed of the soun,
 Lest that hir housbonde, shortly for to sayn,
 Wolde hir for Jesu Cristes love han slayn, 565
 Til Custance made hir boold, and bad hir wirche
 The wyl of Crist, as doghter of his chirche.

The constable weex abasshed of that sight,
 And seyde, "What amounteth all this fare!"
 Custance answerde, "Sire, it is Cristes myght, 570
 That helpeth folk out of the feendes snare."
 And so ferforth she gan oure lay declare,
 That she the constable, er that it were eve,
 Converteth, and on Crist maketh hym bileve.

This constable was no-thing lord of this place 575
 Of which I speke, ther he Custance fond;
 But kepte it strongly many wyntres space
 Under Alla, kyng of al Northhumbrelond,
 That was ful wys and worthy of his hond
 Agayn the Scottes, as men may wel heere;— 580
 But turne I wole agayn to my mateere.

Sathan, that ever us waiteth to bigile,
 Saugh of Custance al hir perfeccioun
 And caste anon how he myghte quite hir while;
 And made a yong knyght, that dwelte in that toun, 585
 Love hir so hoote of foul affeccioun
 That verrailly hym thoughte he sholde spille,
 But he of hir myghte ones have his wille.

He woweth hir, but it availleth noght,
 She wolde do no synne, by no weye; 590
 And for despit he compassed in his thoght
 To maken hir on shameful deeth to deye.

He wayteth whan the constable was aweye
 And pryvely upon a nyght he crepte
 In Hermengylde's chambre whil she slepte. 595

Wery, for-waked in hir orisouns,
 Slepeþ Custance, and Hermengyld also.
 This knyght, thurgh Sathanas temptaciouns,
 All softly is to the bed ygo,
 And kitte the throte of Hermengyld atwo, 600
 And leyde the bloody knyf by dame Custance,
 And wente his wey, ther God yeve hym meschance!

Soone after cometh this constable hoom agayn,
 And eek Alla, that kyng was of that lond,
 And saugh his wyf despitously yslayn, 605
 For which ful ofte he weep and wroong his hond,
 And in the bed the bloody knyf he fond
 By Dame Custance; allas, what myghte she seye?
 For verray wo hir wit was al aweye!

To kyng Alla was toold al this meschance, 610
 And eek the tyme, and where, and in what wise
 That in a ship was founden dame Custance,
 As heer-biforn that ye han herd devyse.
 The kynges herte of pitee gan agryse,
 Whan he saugh so benigne a creature 615
 Falle in disese and in mysaventure.

For as the lomb toward his deeth is broght,
 So stant this innocent before the kyng.
 This false knyght, that hath this tresoun wroght,
 Berth hir on hond that she hath doon thys thyng, 620
 But nathelees, ther was greet moornyng
 Among the peple, and seyn, they kan nat gesse
 That she had doon so greet a wikkednesse;

For they han seyn hir evere so vertuous,
 And lovyng Hermengyld right as hir lyf; 625
 Of this baar witnesse everich in that hous
 Save he that Hermengyld slow with his knyf.
 This gentil kyng hath caught a greet motyf
 Of this witnesse, and thoghte he wolde enquire
 Depper in this, a trouthe for to lere. 630

Allas, Custance, thou hast no champioun!
 Ne fighte kanstow noght, so weylaway!
 But he, that starf for our redempcioun,
 And boond Sathan—and yet lith ther he lay—
 So be thy stronge champion this day! 635
 For but if Crist open myracle kithe,
 Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as swithe.

She sette hir down on knees, and thus she sayde,
 “Immortal God, that savedest Susanne
 Fro false blame, and thou, merciful Mayde, 640
 Marie I meene, doghter to Seynte Anne,
 Bifore whos child angeles synge Osanne,
 If I be giltlees of this felonye,
 My socour be, for ellis shal I dye.”

Have ye nat seyn som tyme a pale face 645
 Among a prees, of hym that hath be lad
 Toward his deeth, wher as hym gat no grace,
 And swich a colour in his face hath had,
 Men myghte knowe his face, that was bistad,
 Amonges alle the faces in that route? 650
 So stant Custance, and looketh hir aboute.

O queenes, lyvyng in prosperitee,
 Duchesses, and ladyes everichone,
 Haveth som routhe on hir adversitee;
 An emperoures doghter stant allone, 655

She hath no wight to whom to make hir mone.
 O blood roial, that stondest in this drede,
 Fer been thy freendes at thy grete nede!

This Alla kyng hath swich compassioun,
 As gentil herte is fulfild of pitee, 660
 That from hise eyen ran the water down.
 "Now hastily do fecche a book," quod he,
 "And if this knyght wol sweren how that she
 This womman slow, yet wol we us avyse,
 Whom that we wole, that shal been oure justise." 665

A Britoun book, written with Evaungiles,
 Was fet, and on this book he swoor anoon
 She gilty was, and in the meene-whiles
 An hand hym smoot upon the nekke-boon,
 That down he fil atones, as a stoon; 670
 And bothe hise eyen broste out of his face,
 In sighte of every body in that place.

A voys was herd in general audience,
 And seyde, "Thou hast desclaundred giltelees
 The doghter of hooly chirche in heigh presence, 675
 Thus hastou doon, and yet holde I my pees."
 Of this mervaille agast was al the prees,
 As mazed folk they stoden everichone
 For drede of wreche, save Custance allone.

Greet was the drede and eek the repentance 680
 Of hem that hadden wronge suspeciou
 Upon this sely innocent, Custance;
 And for this miracle, in conclusioun,
 And by Custances mediacioun,
 The kyng, and many another in that place, 685
 Converted was, thanked be Cristes grace.

This false knyght was slayn for his untrouthe,
 By juggement of Alla hastily—
 And yet Custance hadde of his deeth greet routhe—
 And after this Jesus, of His mercy, 690
 Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
 This hooly mayden, that is so bright and sheene,
 And thus hath Crist ymaad Custance a queene.

But who was woful, if I shal nat lye,
 Of this weddyng but Donegild, and namo, 695
 The kynges mooder, ful of tirannye?
 Hir thoughte hir cursed herte brast atwo,
 She wolde noght hir sone had do so,
 Hir thoughte a despit, that he sholde take
 So strange a creature unto his make. 700

Me list nat of the chaf nor of the stree
 Maken so long a tale, as of the corn;
 What sholde I tellen of the roialtee
 At mariages, or which cours goth biforn,
 Who bloweth in the trumpe, or in an horn? 705
 The fruyt of every tale is for to seye;
 They ete, and drynke, and daunce, and synge, and pleye.

They goon to bedde, as it was skile and right,
 For thogh that wyves be ful hooly thynges,
 They moste take in pacience at nyght 710
 Swiche manere necessities as been plesynges
 To folk that han ywedded hem with rynges,
 And leye a lite hir hoolynesse aside
 As for the tyme, it may no bet bitide.

On hir he gat a knave childe anon, 715
 And to a bisshop and his constable eke
 He took his wyf to kepe, whan he is gon

To Scotlondward, his foomen for to seke.
 Now faire Custance, that is so humble and meke,
 So longe is goon with childe, til that stille 720
 She halt hire chambre, abidyng Cristes wille.

The tyme is come, a knave child she beer,
 Mauricius at the fontstoon they hym calle.
 This constable dooth forth come a messageer,
 And wroot unto his kyng, that cleped was Alle, 725
 How that this blisful tidyng is bifalle,
 And othere tidynges spedeful for to seye;
 He taketh the lettre, and forth he gooth his weye.

This messenger, to doon his advantage,
 Unto the kynges mooder rideth swithe, 730
 And salueth hir ful faire in his langage,
 "Madame," quod he, "ye may be glad and blithe,
 And thanketh God an hundred thousand sithe.
 My lady queene hath child, withouten doute,
 To joye and blisse to al this regne aboute. 735

Lo, heere the lettres seled of this thyng,
 That I moot bere with al the haste I may.
 If ye wol aught unto youre sone, the kyng,
 I am youre servant bothe nyght and day."
 Donegild answerde, "As now at this tyme, nay, 740
 But heere al nyght I wol thou take thy reste,
 Tomorwe wol I seye thee what me leste."

This messenger drank sadly ale and wyn,
 And stolen were hise lettres prively
 Out of his box, whil he sleep as a swyn; 745
 And countrefeted was ful subtilly
 Another lettre wroght ful synfully,
 Unto the kyng direct of this mateere
 Fro his constable, as ye shal after heere.

The lettre spak, the queene delivered was 750
 Of so horrible a feendly creature
 That in the castel noon so hardy was
 That any while dorste ther endure;
 The mooder was an elf, by aventure,
 Ycomen by charmes or by sorcerie, 755
 And every wight hateth hir compaignye.

Wo was this kyng whan he this lettre had sayn,
 But to no wight he tolde his sorwes soore,
 But of his owene hand he wroot agayn:
 "Welcome the sonde of Crist for everemoore 760
 To me, that am now lerned in his loore.
 Lord, welcome be thy lust and thy plesaunce,
 My lust I putte al in thyn ordinaunce.

Kepeth this child, al be it foul or feire,
 And eek my wyf, unto myn hoom-comynge;
 Crist, whan hym list, may sende me an heir
 Moore agreable than this to my likynge."
 This lettre he selet, pryvely wepynge,
 Which to the messenger was take soone
 And forth he gooth, ther is namoore to doone. 770

O messenger, fulfild of dronkenesse,
 Strong is thy breeth, thy lymes faltren ay,
 And thou biwreyest alle secreenesse.
 Thy mynde is lorn, thou janglest as a jay,
 Thy face is turned in a newe array; 775
 Ther dronkenesse regneth in any route,
 Ther is no conseil hyd, withouten doute.

O Donegild, I ne have noon Englissh digne
 Unto thy malice and thy tirannye;
 And therefore to the feend I thee resigne, 780
 Lat hym enditen of thy traitorie!

Fy, mannysh, fy! O nay, by God, I lye!
 Fy, feendlych spirit! for I dar wel telle,
 Thogh thou heere walke, thy spirit is in helle.

This messenger comth fro the kyng agayn, 785
 And at the kynges moodres court he lighte
 And she was of this messenger ful fayn,
 And plesed hym in al that ever she myghte.
 He drank, and wel his girdel underpighte.
 He slepeth, and he fnorteth in his gyse 790
 Al nyght until the sonne gan aryse.

Eft were hise lettres stolen everychon
 And countrefeted lettres in this wyse,
 "The king comandeth his constable anon
 Up peyne of hangyng and on heigh juyse 795
 That he ne sholde suffren in no wyse
 Custance inwith his reawme for tabyde,
 Thre dayes and o quarter of a tyde.

But in the same ship as he hir fond,
 Hir and hir yonge sone, and al hir geere, 800
 He sholde putte, and croude hir fro the lond,
 And chargen hir she never eft coome theere."
 O my Custance, wel may thy goost have fere,
 And slepyng in thy dreem been in penance,
 Whan Donegild cast al this ordinance. 805

This messenger, on morwe whan he wook,
 Unto the Castel halt the nexte way,
 And to the constable he the lettre took.
 And whan that he this pitous lettre say,
 Ful ofte he seyde, "Allas and weylaway!" 810
 "Lord Crist," quod he, "how may this world endure,
 So ful of synne is many a creature?"

O myghty God, if that it be thy wille,
 Sith thou art rightful juge, how may it be
 That thou wolt suffren innocentz to spille, 815
 And wikked folk regnen in prosperitee?
 O goode Custance, allas, so wo is me,
 That I moot be thy tormentour, or deye
 On shames deeth! Ther is noon oother weye!"

Wepen bothe yonge and olde in al that place, 820
 Whan that the kyng this cursed lettre sente,
 And Custance, with a deedly pale face,
 The ferthe day toward the ship she wente;
 But nathelees she taketh in good entente
 The wyl of Crist, and knelynge on the stronde, 825
 She seyde, "Lord, ay welcome be thy sonde!

He that me kepte fro the false blame,
 While I was on the lond amonges yow,
 He kan me kepe from harm and eek fro shame
 In salte see, al thogh I se noght how. 830
 As strong as evere he was, he is yet now;
 In hym triste I, and in his mooder deere,
 That is to me my seyl and eek my steere."

Hir litel child lay wepyng in hir arm,
 And knelynge, pitously to hym she seyde, 835
 "Pees, litel sone, I wol do thee noon harm."
 With that hir coverchief of hir heed she breyde,
 And over hise litel eyen she it leyde,
 And in hir arm she lulleth it ful faste,
 And into hevene hir eyen up she caste. 840

"Mooder," quod she, "and mayde bright, Marie,
 Sooth is that thurgh wommanes eggement
 Mankynde was lorn and damned ay to dye,
 For which thy child was on a croys yrent;

Thy blisful eyen sawe al his torment; 845
 Thanne is ther no comparison bitwene
 Thy wo, and any wo man may sustene.

Thow sawe thy child yslayn bifore thyne eyen,
 And yet now lyveth my litel child, parfay.
 Now, lady bright, to whom alle woful cryen, 850
 Thow glorie of wommanhede, thow faire may,
 Thow haven of refut, brighte sterre of day,
 Rewe on my child, that of thy gentillesse
 Ruest on every reweful in distresse.

O litel child, allas, what is thy gilt, 855
 That nevere wroghtest synne as yet, pardee!
 Why wil thyn harde fader han thee spilt?
 O mercy, deere Constable," quod she,
 "As lat my litel child dwelle heer with thee;
 And if thou darst nat saven hym for blame, 860
 Yet kys hym ones in his fadres name."

Therwith she looketh bakward to the londe,
 And seyde, "Farewel, housbonde routhelees!"
 And up she rist, and walketh down the stronde,
 Toward the ship. Hir folweth al the prees, 865
 And evere she preyeth hir child to holde his pees,
 And taketh hir leve, and with an hooly entente
 She blisseth hir, and into ship she wente.

Vitailled was the ship, it is no drede,
 Habundantly for hir ful longe space; 870
 And othere necessities that sholde nede
 She hadde ynogh, heried be Goddes grace;
 For wynd and weder almyghty God purchase,
 And brynge hir hoom, I kan no bettre seye!
 But in the see she dryveth forth hir weye. 875

Explicit secunda pars.

Sequitur pars tercia.

Alla the kyng comth hoom, soone after this,
 Unto his castel of the which I tolde,
 And asketh where his wyf and his child is.
 The constable gan aboute his herte colde,
 And pleyndly al the manere he hym tolde, 880
 As ye han herd, I kan telle it no better;
 And sheweth the kyng his seel and eek his lettre,

And seyde, "Lord, as ye comanded me,
 Up peyne of deeth, so have I doon, certein."
 This messenger tormented was, til he 885
 Moste biknowe, and tellen plat and pleynd
 Fro nyght to nyght in what place he had leyn,
 And thus by wit and sotil enquiryng
 Ymaged was, by whom this harm gan sprynge.

The hand was knowe that the lettre wroot, 890
 And al the venym of this cursed dede,
 But in what wise certainly I noot.
 Theeffect is this, that Alla, out of drede,
 His mooder slow, that may men pleyndly rede,
 For that she traitoure was to hir ligeance, 895
 Thus endeth olde Donegild, with meschance!

The sorwe that this Alla, nyght and day,
 Maketh for his wyf, and for his child also,
 Ther is no tonge that it telle may—
 But now wol I unto Custance go, 900
 That fleteth in the see in peyne and wo,
 Fyve yeer and moore, as liked Cristes sonde,
 Er that hir ship approched unto londe.

Under an hethen castel, atte laste,
 Of which the name in my text noght I fynde, 905
 Custance and eek hir child the see upcaste.

Almyghty god that saved al mankynde,
 Have on Custance and on hir child som mynde,
 That fallen is in hethen hand eft-soone,
 In point to spille, as I shal telle yow soone. 910

Doun fro the castel comth ther many a wight
 To gauren on this ship and on Custance,
 But shortly from the castel on a nyght
 The lordes styward, God yeve hym meschance!—
 A thief that hadde reneyed oure creance, 915
 Cam into the ship allone, and seyde he sholde
 Hir lemman be, wherso she wolde or nolde.

Wo was this wrecched womman tho bigon!
 Hir child cride, and she cride pitously,
 But blisful Marie heelp hir right anon, 920
 For with hir struglyng wel and myghtily,
 The thief fil over bord al sodeynly,
 And in the see he dreynte for vengeance,
 And thus hath Crist unwemmed kept Custance.

O foule lust of luxurie, lo, thyn ende! 925
 Nat oonly that thou feyntest mannes mynde,
 But verrailly thou wolt his body shende.
 Thende of thy werk or of thy lustes blynde
 Is compleynyng; hou many oon may men fynde,
 That noght for werk somtyme, but for thentente 930
 To doon this synne, been outhur slayn or shente!

How may this wayke womman han this strengthe
 Hir to defende agayn this renegat?
 O Goliass, unmesurable of lengthe,
 Hou myghte David make thee so maat, 935
 So yong, and of armure so desolaat?
 Hou dorste he looke upon thy dredful face?
 Wel may men seen, it nas but Goddes grace!

Who yaf Judith corage or hardynesse
 To sleen hym, Olofernus, in his tente, 940
 And to deliveren out of wrecchednesse
 The peple of God? I seye, for this entente
 That right as God spirit of vigour sente
 To hem, and saved hem out of meschance,
 So sente he myght and vigour to Custance. 945

Forth gooth hir ship thurghout the narwe mouth
 Of Jubaltar and Septe, dryvyng alway,
 Somtyme west, and somtyme north and south,
 And somtyme est, ful many a wery day;
 Til Cristes mooder—blessed be she ay!— 950
 Hath shapen, thurgh hir endeles goodnesse,
 To make an ende of al hir hevynesse.

Now lat us stynte of Custance but a throwe,
 And speke we of the Romain Emperour,
 That out of Surrye hath by lettres knowe 955
 The slaughtre of cristen folk, and dishonour
 Doon to his doghter by a fals traytour,
 I mene the cursed wikked Sowdanesse,
 That at the feeste leet sleen both moore and lesse;

For which this emperour hath sent anon 960
 His senatour with roial ordinance,
 And othere lordes, God woot many oon,
 On Surryens to taken heigh vengeance.
 They brennen, sleen, and brynge hem to meschance
 Ful many a day, but shortly, this is thende, 965
 Hoomward to Rome they shapen hem to wende.

This senatour repaireth with victorie
 To Romeward saillynge ful roially,
 And mette the ship dryvyng, as seith the storie,
 In which Custance sit ful pitously. 970

No thyng ne knew he what she was, ne why
 She was in swich array, ne she nyl seye
 Of hir estat, thogh that she sholde deye.

He bryngeth hir to Rome, and to his wyf
 He yaf hir, and hir yonge sone also, 975
 And with the senatour she ladde hir lyf.
 Thus kan oure Lady bryngen out of wo
 Woful Custance, and many another mo.
 And longe tyme dwelled she in that place,
 In hooly werkes evere, as was hir grace. 980

The senatoures wyf hir aunte was,
 But for all that she knew hir never the moore—
 I wol no lenger tarien in this cas,
 But to kyng Alla, which I spake of yoores,
 That wepeth for his wyf and siketh soore, 985
 I wol retourne, and lete I wol Custance
 Under the senatoures governance.

Kyng Alla, which that hadde his mooder slayn,
 Upon a day fil in swich repentance
 That, if I shortly tellen shal and playn, 990
 To Rome he comth, to receyven his penance,
 And putte hym in the popes ordinance
 In heigh and logh, and Jesu Crist bisoghte
 Foryeve hise wikked werkes that he wroghte.

The fame anon thurgh Rome toun is born 995
 How Alla kyng shal comen on pilgrymage,
 By herbergeours that wenten hym biforn,
 For which the Senatour, as was usage,
 Rood hym agayns, and many of his lynage,
 As wel to shewen his heighe magnificence 1000
 As to doon any kyng a reverence.

Greet cheere dooth this noble Senatour
 To kyng Alla, and he to hym also,
 Everich of hem dooth oother greet honour;
 And so bifel, that inwith a day or two 1005
 This senatour is to kyng Alla go
 To feste; and shortly, if I shal nat lye,
 Custances sone wente in his compaignye.

Som men wolde seyn, at requeste of Custance
 This senatour hath lad this child to feeste; 1010
 I may nat tellen every circumstance,
 Be as be may, ther was he at the leeste,
 But sooth is this, that at his moodres heeste
 Biforn Alla durynge the metes space,
 The child stood lookynge in the kynges face. 1015

This Alla kyng hath of this child greet wonder,
 And to the senatour he seyde anon,
 "Whos is that faire child, that stondeth yonder?"
 "I noot," quod he, "by God and by Seint John!
 A mooder he hath, but fader hath he noon, 1020
 That I of woot." But shortly, in a stounde,
 He tolde Alla how that this child was founde.

"But God woot," quod this senatour also,
 "So vertuous a lyver in my lyf
 Ne saugh I nevere as she, ne herde of mo 1025
 Of worldly wommen, mayde, ne of wyf;
 I dar wel seyn, hir hadde levere a knyf
 Thurghout hir brest, than ben a womman wikke,
 There is no man koude brynge hir to that prikke."

Now was this child as lyke unto Custance, 1030
 As possible is a creature to be.
 This Alla hath the face in remembrance
 Of dame Custance, and theron mused he,

If that the childes mooder were aught she
 That is his wyf; and prively he sighte 1035
 And spedde hym fro the table that he myghte.

"Parfay," thoghte he, "fantome is in myn heed.
 I oghte deme, of skilful juggement,
 That in the salte see my wyf is deed."
 And afterward he made his argument: 1040
 "What woot I, if that Crist have hyder ysent
 My wyf by see, as wel as he hir sente
 To my contree fro thennes that she wente?"

And, after noon, hoom with the senatour
 Goth Alla, for to seen this wonder chaunce. 1045
 This senatour dooth Alla greet honour,
 And hastify he sente after Custance.
 But trusteth weel, hir liste nat to daunce
 Whan that she wiste wherfore was that sonde;
 Unnethe upon hir feet she myghte stonde. 1050

Whan Alla saugh his wyf, faire he hir grette,
 And weep, that it was routhe for to see.
 For at the firste look he on hir sette,
 He knew wel verraily that it was she.
 And she for sorwe as doumb stant as a tree, 1055
 So was hir herte shet in hir distresse,
 Whan she remembred his unkyndenesse.

Twyes she swowned in his owene sighte.
 He weep, and hym excuseth pitously.
 "Now God," quod he, "and alle hise halwes brighte 1060
 So wisly on my soule as have mercy,
 That of youre harm as giltelees am I
 As is Maurice my sone, so lyk youre face;
 Elles the feend me fecche out of this place!"

Long was the sobbyng and the bitter peyne 1065
 Er that hir woful hertes myghte cesse,
 Greet was the pitee for to heere hem pleyne,
 Thurgh whiche pleintes gan hir wo encesse.
 I pray yow alle my labour to relesse;
 I may nat telle hir wo until tomorwe, 1070
 I am so wery for to speke of sorwe.

But finally, whan that the sothe is wist,
 That Alla giltelees was of hir wo,
 I trowe an hundred tymes been they kist,
 And swich a blisse is ther bitwix hem two, 1075
 That save the joye that lasteth everemo
 Ther is noon lyk that any creature
 Hath seyn, or shal, whil that the world may dure.

Tho preyde she hir housbonde mekely,
 In relief of hir longe pitous pyne, 1080
 That he wolde preye hir fader specially
 That, of his magestee, he wolde enclyne
 To vouchesauf som day with hym to dyne.
 She preyde hym eek, he wolde by no weye
 Unto hir fader no word of hir seye. 1085

Som men wolde seyn, how that the child Maurice
 Dooth this message unto this emperour,
 But, as I gesse, Alla was nat so nyce
 To hym that was of so sovereyn honour,
 As he that is of cristen folk the flour, 1090
 Sente any child, but it is bet to deeme
 He wente hymself, and so it may wel seeme.

This emperour hath graunted gentilly
 To come to dyner, as he hym bisoughte,
 And wel rede I he looked bisily 1095

Upon this child, and on his doghter thoghte.
 Alla goth to his in, and as him oghte
 Arrayed for this feste in every wise
 As ferforth as his konnyng may suffice.

The morwe cam, and Alla gan hym dresse 1100
 And eek his wyf, this emperour to meete,
 And forth they ryde in joye and in gladnesse,
 And whan she saugh hir fader in the strete,
 She lighte down and falleth hym to feete.
 "Fader," quod she, "youre yonge child Custance 1105
 Is now ful clene out of youre remembrance.

I am youre doghter Custance," quod she,
 "That whilom ye han sent unto Surrye.
 It am I, fader, that in the salte see
 Was put allone, and dampned for to dye. 1110
 Now goode fader, mercy I yow crye,
 Sende me namoore unto noon hethenesse,
 But thonketh my lord heere of his kyndenesse."

Who kan the pitous joye tellen al
 Bitwixe hem thre, syn they been thus ymette? 1115
 But of my tale make an ende I shal,
 The day goth faste, I wol no lenger lette.
 This glade folk to dyner they hem sette,
 In joye and blisse at mete I lete hem dwelle,
 A thousand foold wel moore than I kan telle. 1120

This child Maurice was sithen emperour
 Maad by the pope, and lyved cristenly.
 To Cristes chirche he dide greet honour;
 But I lete all his storie passen by—
 Of Custance is my tale specially— 1125
 In the olde Romayn geestes may men fynde
 Maurices lyf, I bere it noght in mynde.

This kyng Alla, whan he his tyme say,
 With his Custance, his hooly wyf so sweete,
 To Engelond been they come the righte way, 1130
 Wher as they lyve in joye and in quite.
 But litel while it lasteth, I yow heete,
 Joye of this world, for tyme wol nat abyde,
 Fro day to nyght it changeth as the tyde.

Who lyved evere in swich delit o day 1135
 That hym ne moeved outhur conscience
 Or ire, or talent, or som-kyn affray,
 Envy, or pride, or passion, or offence?
 I ne seye but for this ende this sentence,
 That litel while in joye or in plesance 1140
 Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance.

For deeth, that taketh of heigh and logh his rente,
 Whan passed was a yeer, evene as I gesse,
 Out of this world this kyng Alla he hente,
 For whom Custance hath ful greet hevynesse. 1145
 Now lat us praye God his soule blesse,
 And dame Custance, finally to seye,
 Toward the toun of Rome goth hir weye.

To Rome is come this hooly creature,
 And fyndeth ther hir freendes hoole and sounde. 1150
 Now is she scaped al hire aventure,
 And whan that she hir fader hath yfounde,
 Doun on hir knees falleth she to grounde,
 Wepyng for tendrenesse, in herte blithe,
 She heryeth God an hundred thousand sithe. 1155

In vertu and in hooly almus-dede
 They lyven alle, and never asonder wende
 Til deeth departed hem; this lyf they lede;—

And fareth now weel, my tale is at an ende.
 Now Jesu Crist, that of his myght may sende 1160
 Joye after wo, governe us in his grace,
 And kepe us alle that been in this place. Amen.

Heere endeth the tale of the Man of Lawe.

PROLOGUE TO THE SHIPMANNES TALE

*Here endith the man of lawe his tale. And next folwith
the Shipman his prolog.*

Oure Ost upon his stiropes stood anoon,
And seide, "Good men, herkeneth everychoon;
This was a thrifty tale for the nonys. 1165
Sir parisshe preste," quod he, "for Godis bonys,
Telle us a tale, as was thi forward yore;
I se wel, that ye lernede men in lore
Can meche good, bi Godis dignite."
The parson him answerde, "Benedicite, 1170
What eyleth the man so synfully to swere?"
Oure Ost answerde, "O Jankyn, be ye there?
I smelle a Lollere in the wynde," quod he,
"Howe, goodmen," quod oure Hoste, "herkeneth me,
Abyde for Godis digne passioun, 1175
For we shul han a predicacioun,
This Lollere here wol prechen us somewhat."
"Nay, bi Godis soule, that shal he nat,"
Seyde the Shipman, "here shal he not preche,
He shal no gospel glosen here, ne teche. 1180
We leven alle in the grete God," quod he,
"He wolde sowen som difficulte
Or sprengen cokkel in oure clene corn.
And therefore, Ost, I warne the biforn,
My joly body shal a tale telle 1185
And I shal clynkyn yow so mery a belle
That I shal wakyn al this companye;
But it shal not ben of Philosophie,
Ne phislyas, ne termes queynte of lawe;
Ther nis but litil Latyn in my mawe." 1190

*Here endith the Shipman his prolog. And next folwyng
he bigynneth his tale.*

THE TALE.

[Daun John, a monk of Paris, beguiles the wife of a merchant of St. Denis by money borrowed from her husband. She saves herself, on the point of discovery, by a ready answer.]

END-LINK

*Bihoold the murie wordes of the Hoost to the Shipman
and to the lady Prioressse.*

“Wel seyde, by corpus dominus,” quod our Hoost, 1625
 “Now longe moote thou saille by the cost,
 Sir gentil maister, gentil maryneer.
 God yeve this monk a thousand last quade yeer!
 A ha! felawes, beth ware of swich a jape.
 The monk putte in the mannes hood an ape, 1630
 And in his wyves eek, by Seint Austyn;
 Draweth no monkes moore unto your in.
 But now passe over, and lat us seke aboute,
 Who shal now telle first of al this route
 Another tale?” and with that word he sayde, 1635
 As curteisly as it had ben a mayde,
 “My lady Prioressse, by youre leve,
 So that I wiste I sholde yow nat greve,
 I wolde demen that ye tellen sholde
 A tale next, if so were that ye wolde. 1640
 Now wol ye vouchesauf, my lady deere?”
 “Gladly,” quod she, and seyde as ye-shal heere.

THE PRIORESSES TALE

The prologe of the Prioresses tale.

Domine dominus noster.

O lord oure lord, thy name how merveillous
Is in this large world ysprad—quod she—
For noght oonly thy laude precious 1645
Parfourned is by men of dignitee,
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Parfourned is, for on the brest soukyng
Somtyme shewen they thyn heriyng.

Wherefore in laude, as I best kan or may, 1650
Of thee, and of the whyte lylve flour
Which that the bar, and is a mayde alway,
To telle a storie I wol do my labour;
Nat that I may encreessen hir honour,
For she herself is honour, and the roote 1655
Of bountee, next hir sone, and soules booté.

O mooder mayde! O mayde mooder fre! 7
O bussh unbrent, brennyng in Moyses sighte, 1660
That ravysedest down fro the deitee
Thurgh thyn humblesse, the goost that in thalighte,
Of whos vertu, whan he thyn herte lighte,
Conceyved was the Fadres sapience,
Help me to telle it in thy reverence.

Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,
Thy vertu, and thy grete humylitee, 1665
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science,
For somtyme, lady, er men praye to thee,
Thou goost biforn of thy benyngnytee
And getest us the lyght, thurgh thy preyere,
To gyden us unto thy sone so deere. 1670

1651 whyte. 1669 thurgh lyght of.

My konnyng is so wayk, O blisful queene,
 For to declare thy grete worthynesse,
 That I ne may the weighte nat susteene,
 But as a child of twelf monthc oold, or lesse,
 That kan unnethes any word expresse, 1675
 Right so fare I; and therfore I yow preye,
 Gydeth my song that I shal of yow seye.

Heere bigynneth the Prioresses Tale.

Ther was in Asye, in a grēt citee,
 Amonges cristene folk a Jewerye,
 Sustened by a lord of that contree 1680
 For foule usure and lucre of vileynye,
 Hateful to Crist and to his compaignye,
 And thurgh this strete men myghte ride or wende,
 For it was free and open at eyther ende.

A litel scole of cristen folk ther stood 1685
 Doun at the ferther ende, in which ther were
 Children an heep, ycomen of cristen blood,
 That lerned in that scole yeer by yere
 Swich manere doctrine as men used there,
 This is to seyn, to syngen and to rede, 1690
 As smale children doon in hir childhede.

Among thise children was a wydwes sone,
 A litel clergeoun, seven yeer of age,
 That day by day to scole was his wone,
 And eek also, wher as he saugh thymage 1695
 Of Cristes mooder, he hadde in usage
 As hym was taught, to knele adoun, and seye
 His Ave Marie, as he goth by the weye.

Thus hath this wydwe hir litel sone ytaught
 Oure blisful lady, Cristes mooder deere, 1700
 To worshiþe ay; and he forgate it naught,
 For sely child wol alday soone leere.
 But ay, whan I remembre on this mateere,
 Seint Nicholas stant evere in my presence,
 For he so yong to Crist dide reverence. 1705

This litel child, his litel book lernynge,
 As he sat in the scole at his prymer,
 He "Alma redemptoris" herde synge
 As children lerned hir anthiphoner;
 And as he dorste, he drough hym ner and ner, 1710
 And herkned ay the wordes and the noote,
 Til he the firste vers koude al by rote.

Noght wiste he what this Latyn was to seye,
 For he so yong and tendre was of age,
 But on a day his felawe gan he preye 1715
 Texpounden hym this song in his langage,
 Or telle hym why this song was in usage;
 This preyde he hym to construe and declare
 Ful often tyme upon hise knowes bare.

His felawe, which that elder was than he, 1720
 Answerde hym thus, "This song, I have herd seye,
 Was maked of oure blisful Lady free,
 Hir to salue, and eek hir for to preye
 To been our help, and socour whan we deye.
 I kan namoore expounde in this mateere, 1725
 I lerne song, I kan but smal grammere."

"And is this song maked in reverence
 Of Cristes mooder?" seyde this innocent.
 "Now, certes, I wol do my diligence
 To konne it al, er Cristemasse is went; 1730

Though that I for my prymer shal be shent
 And shal be beten thries in an houre,
 I wol it konne, oure lady for to honoure."

His felawe taughte hym homward prively
 Fro day to day, til he koude it by rote; 1735
 And thanne he song it wel and boldely
 Fro word to word acordynge with the note.
 Twies a day it passed thurgh his throte,
 To scoleward, and homward whan he wente;
 On Cristes mooder set was his entente. 1740

As I have seyde, thurghout the Jewerie
 This litel child, as he cam to and fro,
 Ful murily than wolde he synge and crie
 "O Alma redemptoris" evere-mo.
 The swetnesse hath his herte perced so 1745
 Of Cristes mooder, that to hir to preye
 He kan nat stynte of syngyng by the weye.

Oure firste foo, the serpent Sathanas,
 That hath in Jewes herte his waspes nest,
 Up swal, and seyde, "O Hebrayk peple, allas, 1750
 Is this to yow a thyng that is honest,
 That swich a boy shal walken as hym lest
 In youre despit, and synge of swich sentence,
 Which is agayn oure lawes reverence?"

Fro thennes forth the Jewes han conspired 1755
 This innocent out of this world to chace.
 An homycide therto han they hyred
 That in an aleye hadde a privee place;
 And as the child gan forby for to pace,
 This cursed Jew hym hente and heeld hym faste, 1760
 And kitte his throte, and in a pit hym caste.

I seye that in a wardrobe they hym threwe,
 Where as thise Jewes purgen hire entraille.
 O cursed folk of Herodes al newe,
 What may youre yvel entente yow availle? 1765
 Mordre wol out, certeyn, it wol nat faille,
 And namely ther thonour of God shal sprede,
 The blood out crieth on youre cursed dede.

O martir, sowed to virginitee,
 Now maystow syngen, folwyng evere in oon 1770
 The white lamb celestial—quod she—
 Of which the grete Evaungelist Seint John
 In Pathmos wroot, which seith that they that goon
 Biforn this lamb and synge a song al newe,
 That never, fleshly, wommen they ne knewe. 1775

This povre wydwe awaiteth al that nyght
 After hir litel child, but he cam noght;
 For which, as soone as it was dayes lyght,
 With face pale of drede and bisy thoght,
 She hath at scole and elles-where hym soght, 1780
 Til finally she gan so fer espie,
 That he last seyn was in the Jewerie.

With moodres pitee in hir brest enclosed,
 She gooth, as she were half out of hir mynde,
 To every place where she hath supposed 1785
 By liklihede hir litel child to finde,
 And evere on Cristes mooder, meeke and kynde,
 She cride, and atte laste thus she wroghte,
 Among the cursed Jewes she hym soghte.

She frayneth, and she preyeth pitously 1790
 To every Jew that dwelte in thilke place,
 To telle hir if hir child wente oght forby.
 They seyde nay; but Jesu, of his grace,

Yaf in hir thoght, inwith a litel space,
 That in that place after hir sone she cryde, 1795
 Wher he was casten in a pit bisyde.

O grete God, that parfournest thy laude
 By mouth of innocentz, lo, heer thy myght!
 This gemme of chastite, this emeraude,
 And eek of martirdom the ruby bright, 1800
 Ther he with throte ykorven lay upright,
 He "Alma redemptoris" gan to synge
 So loude, that al the place gan to ryng.

The cristene folk that thurgh the strete wente
 In coomen, for to wondre upon this thyng, 1805
 And hastily they for the Provost sente.
 He cam anon withouten tariyng,
 And herieth Crist that is of hevene kyng,
 And eek his mooder, honour of mankynde;
 And after that, the Jewes leet he bynde. 1810

he had then

This child, with pitous lamentacioun,
 Uptaken was, syngyng his song alway,
 And with honour of greet processoun
 They carien hym unto the nexte abbay;
 His mooder swownyng by his beere lay, 1815
 Unnethe myghte the peple that was there
 This newe Rachel bryng fro his beere.

With torment and with shameful deeth echon
 This Provost dooth the Jewes for to sterve^r,
 That of this mordre wiste, and that anon. 1820
 He nolde no swich cursednesse observe;
 Yvele shal have that yvele wol deserve.
 Therefore with wilde hors he dide hem drawe,
 And after that he heng hem, by the lawe.

Upon his beere ay lith this innocent 1825
 Biforn the chief auter, whil masse laste,
 And after that, the abbot with his covent
 Han sped hem for to burien hym ful faste,
 And whan they hooly water on hym caste,
 Yet spak this child, whan spreynd was hooly water, 1830
 And song "O Alma redemptoris mater."

This abbot, which that was an hooly man,
 As monkes been—or elles oghte be—
 This yonge child to conjure he bigan,
 And seyde, "O deere child, I halse thee, 1835
 In vertu of the hooly Trinitee;
 Tel me, what is thy cause for to synge
 Sith that thy throte is kut, to my semyngne."

"My throte is kut unto my nekke-boon,"
 Seyde this child, "and, as by wey of kynde, 1840
 I sholde have dyed, ye, longe tyme agon,
 But Jesu Crist, as ye in bookes fynde,
 Wil that his glorie laste and be in mynde,
 And for the worship of his mooder deere,
 Yet may I synge "O Alma" loude and cleere. 1845

This welle of mercy, Cristes mooder swete,
 I loved alwey as after my konnyng;e;
 And whan that I my lyf sholde forlete,
 To me she cam, and bad me for to synge
 This antheme, verrailly, in my deyyng, 1850
 As ye han herd, and whan that I hadde songe,
 Me thoughte she leyde a greyn upon my tonge.

Wherfore I synge, and synge I moot certeyn
 In honour of that blisful mayden free,
 Til fro my tonge oftaken is the greyn. 1855

And afterward thus seyde she to me,
 'My litel child, now wol I fecche thee,
 Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge ytake;
 Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake.' "

This hooly monk, this Abbot, hym meene I, 1860
 His tonge out-caughte, and took away the greyn,
 And he yaf up the goost ful softly;
 And whan this Abbot hadde this wonder seyn,
 Hise salte teeris trikkled doun as reyn,
 And gruf he fil al plat upon the grounde, 1865
 And stille he lay, as he had been ybounde.

The covent eek lay on the pavement,
 Wepyng, and heryen Cristes mooder deere.
 And after that they ryse, and forth been went,
 And tooken away this martir from his beere, 1870
 And in a temple of marbul stones cleere
 Enclosen they his litel body sweete.
 Ther he is now, God leve us for to meete!

O yonge Hugh of Lyncoln, slayn also
 With cursed Jewes, as it is notable, 1875
 For it nis but a litel while ago,
 Preye eek for us, we synful folk unstable,
 That of his mercy God so merciablen
 On us his grete mercy multiplie,
 For reverence of his mooder Marie. Amen. 1880

1866 been leyn. 1873 alle for. 1876 is.

Heere is ended the Prioresses Tale.

PROLOGUE TO CHAUCER'S TALE OF SIR THOPAS

Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost to Chaucer.

Whan seyð was al this miracle, every man
As ʒobre was, that wonder was to se,
Til that oure Hooste jopen tho bigan,
And thanne at erst he looked upon me,
And seyde thus, "What man artow," quod he, 1885
"Thou lookest as thou woldest fynde an hare,
For ever upon the ground I se thee stare.

Approche neer, and looke up murily;
Now war yow, sires, and lat this man have place.
He in the waast is shape as wel as I; 1890
This were a popet in an arm tenbrace
For any womman smal, and fair of face.
He semeth elvyssh by his contenance,
For unto no wight dooth he daliaunce.

Sey now somewhat; syn oother folk han sayd, 1895
Telle us a tale of myrthe, and that anon."
"Hooste," quod I, "ne beth nat yvele apayed,
For oother tale certes kan I noon
But of a ryme I lerned longe agoon."
"Ye, that is good," quod he, "now shul we heere 1900
Som deyntee thyng, me thynketh by his cheere."

1883, 1897, Hoost; *tho* to. 1899 rym. 1900 *we* ye.

SIR THOPAS

Heere bigynneth Chaucers tale of Thopas.

Listeth, lordes, in good entent,
And I wol telle verrayment
 Of myrthe and of solas,
Al of a knyght was fair and gent 1905
In bataille and in tourneyment,
 His name was Sir Thopas.

Yborn he was in fer contree,
In Flaundres, al biyonde the see,
 At Poperyng in the place; 1910
His fader was a man ful free,
And lord he was of that contree,
 As it was Goddes grace.

Sir Thopas wax a doghty swayn,
Whit was his face as payndemayn, 1915
 Hise lippes rede as rose;
His rode is lyk scarlet in grayn,
And I yow telle, in good certayn,
 He hadde a semely nose.

His heer, his berd, was lyk saffroun, 1920
That to his girdel raughte adoun;
 Hise shoon of Cordewane.
Of Brugges were his hosen broun,
His robe was of syklatoun
 That coste many a jane. 1925

He koude hunte at wilde deer,
And ride an haukyng for river,
 With grey goshawk on honde,

Therto he was a good archeer,
 Of wrastlyng was ther noon his peer, 1930
 Ther any ram shal stonde.

Ful many a mayde, bright in bour,
 They moorne for hym, paramour,
 Whan hem were bet to slepe;
 But he was chaast and no lechour, 1935
 And sweete as is the brembulfour
 That bereth the rede hepe.

And so bifel upon a day,
 Forsothe as I yow telle may,
 Sir Thopas wolde out ride; 1940
 He worth upon his steede gray,
 And in his hand a launcegay,
 A long swerd by his side.

He priketh thurgh a fair forest,
 Therinne is many a wilde best, 1945
 Ye, bothe bukke and hare,
 And as he priketh north and est,
 I telle it yow, hym hadde alмест
 Bitidde a sory care.

Ther spryngen herbes, grete and smale, 1950
 The lycorys and cetewale,
 And many a clowe-gylofre,
 And notemuge to putte in ale,
 Wheither it be moyste or stale,
 Or for to lye in cofre. 1955

The briddes synge, it is no nay,
 The sparhawk and the papejay
 That joye it was to heere,
 The thrustelcok made eek hir lay,
 The wodedowve upon a spray 1960
 She sang ful loude and cleere.

Sir Thopas fil in love-longynge,
 Al whan he herde the thrustel synge,
 And pryked as he were wood;
 His faire steede in his prikyng
 So swatte that men myghte him wrynge,
 His sydes were al blood.

1965

Sir Thopas eek so wery was
 For prikyng on the softe gras,
 So fiers was his corage,
 That doun he leyde him in that plas
 To make his steede som solas,
 And yaf hym good forage.

1970

"O seinte Marie, benedicite,
 What eyleth this love at me
 To bynde me so soore?
 Me dremed al this nyght, pardee,
 An elf-queene shal my lemman be,
 And slepe under my goore.

1975

An elf-queene wol I love, ywis,
 For in this world no womman is
 Worthy to be my make
 In towne;

1980

Alle othere wommen I forsake,
 And to an elf-queene I me take
 By dale and eek by downe."

1985

Into his sadel he clamb anon,
 And priketh over stile and stoon
 An elf-queene for tespye,
 Til he so longe hadde riden and goon
 That he foond, in a pryve woon,
 The contree of Fairye
 So wilde;

1990

For in that contree was ther noon
 That to him dorste ryde or goon, 1995
 Neither wyf ne childe,

Til that ther cam a greet geaunt,
 His name was Sir Olifaunt,
 A perilous man of dede;
 He seyde "Child, by Termagaunt, 2000
 But if thou prike out of myn haunt,
 Anon I sle thy steede
 With mace.

Heere is the queene of Fayerye,
 With harpe and pipe and symphonye, 2005
 Dwellyng in this place."

The child seyde, "Also moote I thee,
 Tomorwe wol I meete with thee,
 Whan I have myn armoure.
 And yet I hope, par ma fay, 2010
 That thou shalt with this launcegay
 Abyen it ful sowre.
 Thy mawe

Shal I percen if I may
 Er it be fully pryme of day, 2015
 For heere thou shalt be slawe."

Sir Thopas drow abak ful faste,
 This geant at hym stones caste
 Out of a fel staf-slynge;
 But faire escapeth Child Thopas, 2020
 And al it was thurgh Goddes gras,
 And thurgh his fair berynge.

Yet listeth, lordes, to my tale,
 Murier than the nightyngale,
 For now I wol yow rowne 2025

How Sir Thopas, with sydes smale,
 Prikyng over hill and dale
 Is comen agayn to towne.

His murie men comanded he
 To make hym bothe game and glee, 2030
 For nedes moste he fighte
 With a geaunt with hevedes three,
 For paramour and jolitee
 Of oon that shoon ful brighte.

"Do come," he seyde, "my mynstrales, 2035
 And geestours, for to tellen tales
 Anon in myn armynge;
 Of romances that been roiales,
 Of Popes and of Cardinales,
 And eek of love-likynge." 2040

They fette hym first the sweete wyn,
 And mede eek in a mazelyn,
 And roial spicerye,
 And gyngebreede that was ful fyn,
 And lycorys, and eek comyn, 2045
 With sugre that is so trye.

He dide next his white leere
 Of clooth of lake, fyn and cleere,
 A breech, and eek a sherte,
 And next his sherte an aketoun, 2050
 And over that an haubergeoun,
 For Percyng of his herte.

And over that a fyn hawberk,
 Was al ywroght of Jewes werk,
 Ful strong it was of plate. 2055
 And over that his cote-armour
 As whit as is a lilye flour,
 In which he wol debate.

His sheeld was al of gold so reed,
 And therinne was a bores heed, 2060
 A charbocle bisyde;
 And there he swoor on ale and breed,
 How that "the geaunt shal be deed
 Bityde what bityde!"

Hise jambeux were of quyrboilly, 2065
 His swerdes shethe of yvory,
 His helm of laton bright,
 His sadel was of rewel-boon,
 His brydel as the sonne shoon,
 Or as the moone light. 2070

His spere it was of fyn ciprees,
 That bodeth werre, and no thyng pees,
 The heed ful sharpe ygrounde;
 His steede was al dappull-gray,
 It gooth an ambil in the way 2075
 Ful softely and rounde
 In londe.
 Loo, lordes myne, heere is a fit;
 If ye wol any moore of it,
 To telle it wol I fonde. 2080

The Second Fit.

Now holde youre mouth, par charitee,
 Bothe knyght and lady free,
 And herkne to my spelle;
 Of batailles and of chivalry
 And of ladyes love-drury 2085
 Anon I wol yow telle.

Men speken of romances of prys,
 Of Hornchild, and of Ypotys,

Of Beves and Sir Gy,
 Of Sir Lybeux and Pleyndamour, 2090
 But Sir Thopas, he bereth the flour
 Of roial chivalry.

His goode steede al he bistrood,
 And forth upon his wey he glood
 As sparcle out of the bronde. 2095
 Upon his creest he bar a tour,
 And therinne stiked a lilie-flour;
 God shilde his cors fro shonde!

And for he was a knyght auntrous,
 He nolde slepen in noon hous, 2100
 But liggen in his hoode.
 His brighte helm was his wonger,
 And by hym baiteth his dextrer
 Of herbes fyne and goode.

Hym-self drank water of the well, 2105
 As dide the knyght sir Percyvell
 So worly under wede,
 Til on a day————

Heere the Hoost stynteth Chaucer of his Tale of Thopas.

“Na moore of this, for Goddes dignitee,”
 Quod oure hooste, “for thou makest me 2110
 So wery of thy verray lewednesse,
 That also wisly God my soule blesse,
 Min eres aken of thy drasty speche.
 Now swich a rym the devel I biteche!
 This may wel be rym dogerel,” quod he. 2115

"Why so?" quod I, "why wiltow lette me
 Moore of my tale than another man
 Syn that it is the beste tale I kan?"
 "By God," quod he, "for pleylny at a word
 Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a toord, 2120
 Thou doost noght elles but despendest tyme.
 Sir, at o word thou shalt no lenger ryme.
 Lat se wher thou kanst tellen aught in geeste,
 Or telle in prose somewhat, at the leeste,
 In which ther be som murthe or som doctryne." 2125
 "Gladly," quod I, "by Goddes sweete pyne,
 I wol yow telle a litel thyng in prose,
 That oghte liken yow as I suppose,
 Or elles, certes, ye been to daungerous.
 It is a moral tale vertuous, 2130
 Al be it take somtyme in sondry wyse
 Of sondry folk as I shal yow devyse.
 As thus; ye woot that every Evaungelist
 That telleth us the peyne of Jesu Crist
 Ne seith nat alle thyng as his felawe dooth, 2135
 But, nathelees, hir sentence is al sooth,
 And alle acorden as in hir sentence,
 Al be thier in hir tellyng difference.
 For somme of hem seyn moore, and somme seyn lesse,
 Whan they his pitous passioun expresse; 2140
 I mecne of Marke, Mathew, Luc, and John,
 But doutelees hir sentence is al oon,
 Therfore, lordynges alle, I yow biseche
 If that yow thynke I varie as in my speche,
 As thus, though that I telle somewhat moore 2145
 Of proverbes, than ye han herd bifoore,
 Comprehended in this litel tretys heere,
 To enforce with theeffect of my mateere,
 And though I nat the same wordes seye
 As ye han herd, yet to yow alle I preye, 2150

Blameth me nat; for, as in my sentence
Ye shul nat fynden moche difference
Fro the sentence of this tretys lyte
After the which this murye tale I write.
And therfore herkneth what that I shal seye, 2155
And lat me tellen al my tale, I preye.”

THE TALE (in prose).

[A young man called Melibeus, whose wife Prudence and daughter Sophie (Wisdom) are maltreated by his foes in his absence, is counseled with many wise sayings uttered by his wife tending toward peace and forgiveness, instead of revenge.]

2152 *moche om*

PROLOGUE TO THE MONKES TALE

The murye wordes of the Hoost to the Monk.

Whan ended was my tale of Melibee,
And of Prudence, and hir benignytee, 3080
Oure hooste seyde, "As I am feithful man,
And by that precious corpus Madrian,
I hadde levere than a barel ale
That goode lief my wyf hadde herd this tale!
She nys nothyng of swich pacience 3085
As was this Melibeus wyf, Prudence.
By Goddes bones, whan I bete my knaves
She bryngeth me forth the grete clobbed staves,
And crieth, 'Slee the dogges, everichoon,
And brek hem, bothe bak and every boon.' 3090
And if that any neighebore of myne
Wol nat in chirche to my wyf enclyne,
Or be so hardy to hir to trespase,
Whan she comth hoom she rampeth in my face,
And crieth, 'false coward, wreck thy wyf! 3095
By corpus bones, I wol have thy knyf,
And thou shalt have my distaf and go spynne
Fro day to nyght!' Right thus she wol bigynne.
'Allas,' she seith, 'that evere I was shape
To wedden a milksop or a coward ape, 3100
That wol been overlad with every wight;
Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyves right!
This is my lif, but if that I wol fighte,
And out at dore anon I moot me dighte,
Or elles I am but lost, but if that I 3105

Be lik a wilde leoun fool-hardy.
 I woot wel she wol do me slee som day
 Som neighebore, and thanne go my way.
 For I am perilous with knyf in honde,
 Al be it that I dar hir nat withstonde. 3110
 For she is byg in armes, by my feith,
 That shal he fynde that hir mysdooth or seith—
 But lat us passe away fro this mateere.
 My lord the Monk," quod he, "be myrie of cheere,
 For ye shul telle a tale, trewely. 3115
 Loo, Rouchestre stant heer faste by.
 Ryde forth, myn owene lord, brek nat oure game.
 But, by my trouthe, I knowe nat youre name;
 Wher shal I calle yow my lord daun John,
 Or daun Thomas, or elles daun Albon? 3120
 Of what hous be ye, by youre fader kyn?
 I vowe to God, thou hast a ful fair skyn,
 It is a gentil pasture ther thow goost.
 Thou art nat lyk a penant or a goost.
 Upon my feith, thou art som officer, 3125
 Som worthy sexteyn, or som celerer,
 For by my fader soule, as to my doom,
 Thou art a maister whan thou art at hoom,
 No povre cloysterer, ne no novys,
 But a governour, wily and wys; 3130
 And therwith-al of brawnes and of bones
 A wel-farynge persone, for the nones.
 I pray to God, yeve hym confusioun
 That first thee broghte unto religioun.
 Thou woldest han been a tredefowel aright; 3135
 Haddestow as greet a leeve as thou hast myght
 To parfourne al thy lust in engendrure,
 Thou haddest bigeten ful many a creature.
 Allas, why werestow so wyd a cope?
 God yeve me sorwe, but, and I were a pope, 3140

Nat oonly thou but every myghty man
 Though he were shorn ful hye upon his pan,
 Sholde have a wyf, for al the world is lorn.
 Religioun hath take up al the corn
 Of tredyng, and we borel men been shrympes. 3145
 Of fieble trees ther comen wrecched ympes.
 This maketh that our heyres ben so sclendre
 And feble, that they may nat wel engendre;
 This maketh that oure wyves wole assaye
 Religious folk, for ye mowe bettre paye 3150
 Of Venus paiementz than mowe we;
 God woot no lussheburghes payen ye.
 But be nat wrooth, my lord, for that I pleye,
 Ful ofte in game a sooth I have herd seye."
 This worthy Monk took al in pacience, 3155
 And seyde, "I wol doon al my diligence,
 As fer as sowneth into honestee,
 To telle yow a tale, or two, or three.
 And if yow list to herkne hyderward
 I wol yow seyn the lyf of seint Edward; 3160
 Or ellis first tragedies wol I telle
 Of whiche I have an hundred in my celle.
 Tragedie is to seyn, a certeyn storie,
 As olde bookes maken us memorie,
 Of hym that stood in greet prosperitee 3165
 And is yfallen out of heigh degree
 Into myserie, and endeth wrecchedly,
 And they ben versified communely
 Of six feet, which men clepen exametron.
 In prose eek been endited many oon, 3170
 And eek in meetre, in many a sondry wyse.
 Lo, this declaryng oghte ynogh suffise;
 Now herkne, if yow liketh for to heere.
 But first, I yow biseeke in this mateere,
 Though I by ordre telle nat thise thynges, 3175

Be it of popes, emperours, or kynges,
 After hir ages, as men writen fynde,
 But tellen hem, som bifore and som bihynde,
 As it now comth unto my remembraunce;
 Have me excused of myn ignoraunce.

3180

THE MONKES TALE

*Heere bigynneth the Monkes Tale de Casibus Virorum
Illustrium.*

I wol biwaille in manere of Tragedie
The harm of hem that stooode in heigh degree,
And fillen so, that ther nas no remedie
To brynge hem out of hir adversitee.
For certein, whan that Fortune list to flee, 3185
Ther may no man the cours of hire withholde;
Lat no man truste on blynd prosperitee;
Be war of thise ensamples, trewe and olde.

Lucifer

At Lucifer, though he an aungel were,
And nat a man, at hym wol I biginne, 3190
For though Fortune may noon aungel dere,
From heigh degree yet fel he for his synne
Doun into helle, where he yet is inne.
O Lucifer, brightest of aungels alle,
Now artow Sathanas, that mayst nat twynne 3195
Out of miserie, in which that thou art falle.

Adam

Loo Adam, in the feeld of Damysse,ne,
With Goddes owene fynger wrought was he,
And nat bigeten of mannes sperme unclene,
And welte all Paradys, savynge o tree. 3200
Hadde nevere worldly man so heigh degree
As Adam, til he, for mysghovernance,
Was dryven out of hys hye prosperitee
To labour, and to helle, and to meschaunce.

Sampson

Loo Sampson, which that was annunciat 3205
 By angel, longe er his nativitee,
 And was to God almyghty consecrat,
 And stood in noblesse whil he myghte see,
 Was nevere swich another as was hee,
 To speke of strengthe and therwith hardynesse; 3210
 But to hise wyves toolde he his secree,
 Thurgh which he slow hymself for wrecchednesse.

Sampsoun, this noble almyghty champioun,
 Withouten wepene, save his handes tweye,
 He slow and al torente the leoun 3215
 Toward his weddyng walkynge by the weye.
 His false wyf koude hym so plese and preye
 Til she his conseil knew, and she untrew
 Unto hise foos his conseil gan biwrewe,
 And hym forsook, and took another newe. 3220

Thre hundred foxes took Sampson for ire,
 And alle hir tayles he togydre bond,
 And sette the foxes tayles alle on fire;
 For he on every tayl had knyt a brond,
 And they brende alle the cornes in that lond, 3225
 And alle hir olyveres and vynes eke.
 A thousand men he slow eek with his hond,
 And hadde no wepene but an asses cheke.

Whan they were slayn, so thursted hym, that he
 Was wel ny lorn, for which he gan to preye 3230
 That God wolde on his peyne han som pitee,
 And sende hym drynke, or elles moste he deye;
 And of this asses cheke, that was drewe,
 Out of a wang-tooth sprang anon a welle
 Of which he drank anon, shortly to seye, 3235
 Thus heelp hym God, as Judicum can telle.

By verray force at Gazan, on a nyght,
 Maugree Philistiens of that citee,
 The gates of the toun he hath upplyght,
 And on his bak ycaried hem hath he 3240
 Hye on an hille, that men myghte hem see.
 O noble almyghty Sampson, lief and deere,
 Had thou nat toold to wommen thy secree,
 In all this world ne hadde been thy peere.

This Sampson nevere ciser drank, ne wyn, 3245
 Ne on his heed cam rasour noon, ne sheere,
 By precept of the messenger divyn,
 For alle hise strengthes in hise heeres weere.
 And fully twenty wynter, yeer by yeere,
 He hadde of Israel the governaunce. 3250
 But soone shal he wepen many a teere,
 For wommen shal hym bryngen to meschaunce!

Unto his lemman Dalida he tolde
 That in hise heeres al his strengthe lay,
 And falsly to hise fooman she hym solde; 3255
 And slepyng in hir barme upon a day
 She made to clippe or shere hise heres away,
 And made hise foomen al this craft espyen.
 And whan that they hym foond in this array,
 They bounde hym faste, and putten out hise eyen. 3260

But er his heer were clipped or yshave,
 Ther was no boond with which men myghte him bynde,
 But now is he in prison in a cave,
 Where as they made hym at the queerne grynde.
 O noble Sampson, strongest of mankynde, 3265
 O whilom juge in glorie and in richesse,
 Now maystow wepen with thyne eyen blynde,
 Sith thou fro wele art falle in wrecchednesse!

The ende of this caytyf was as I shal seye;
 Hise foomen made a feeste upon a day, 3270
 And made hym as hir fool biforn hem pleye.
 And this was in a temple of greet array;
 But atte laste he made a foul affray,
 For he two pilers shook, and made hem falle,
 And doun fil temple and al, and ther it lay, 3275
 And slow hymself, and eek his foomen alle.

This is to seyn, the prynces everichoon,
 And eek thre thousand bodyes were ther slayn
 With fallynge of the grete temple of stoon.
 Of Sampson now wol I namoore sayn: 3280
 Beth war by this ensample oold and playn
 That no men telle hir conseil til hir wyves
 Of swich thyng as they wolde han secree fayn,
 If that it touche hir lymmes or hir lyves.

Hercules

Off Hercules the sovereyn conquerour 3285
 Syngen hise werkes laude and heigh renoun,
 For in his tyme of strengthe he was the flour.
 He slow and rafte the skyn of the leoun,
 He of Centauros leyde the boost adoun,
 He arpies slow, the crueel bryddes felle, 3290
 He golden apples refte of the dragoun,
 He drow out Cerberus the hound of helle.

He slow the crueel tyrant Busirus,
 And made his hors to frete hym, flessch and boon;
 He slow the fryr serpent venymus, 3295
 Of Acheloyes two hornes, he brak oon,
 And he slow Cacus in a Cave of stoon;
 He slow the geaunt Antheus the stronge,
 He slow the grisly boor, and that anon,
 And bar the hevene on his nekke longe. 3300

Was nevere wight, sith that this world bigan,
 That slow so manye monstres as dide he.
 Thurghout this wyde world his name ran,
 What for his strengthe, and for his heigh bountee,
 And every reawme wente he for to see. 3305
 He was so stroong that no man myghte hym lette;
 At bothe the worldes endes, seith Trophee,
 In stide of boundes, he a pileer sette.

A lemman hadde this noble champioun,
 That highte Dianira, fressh as May, 3310
 And as thise clerkes maken menciouun,
 She hath hym sent a sherte fressh and gay.
 Allas, this sherte, allas, and weylaway!
 Envenymed was so subtilly withalle,
 That er that he had wered it half a day . 3315
 It made his flessch al from hise bones falle.

But nathelees somme clerkes hir excusen
 By oon that highte Nessus, that it maked.
 Be as be may, I wol hir noght accusen;
 But on his bak this sherte he wered al naked, 3320
 Til that his flessch was for the venym blaked;
 And whan he saugh noon oother remedye,
 In hoote coles he hath hym-selven raked,
 For with no venym deigned hym to dye.

Thus starf this worthy myghty Hercules. 3325
 Lo, who may truste on Fortune any throwe?
 For hym that folweth al this world of prees,
 Er he be war, is ofte yleyd ful lowe.
 Ful wys is he that kan hymselven knowe.
 Beth war, for whan that Fortune list to glose, 3330
 Thanne wayteth she her man to overthrowe,
 By swich a wey, as he wolde leest suppose.

Nabugodonosor

The myghty trone, the precious tresor
 The glorious ceptre and roial magestee
 That hadde the kyng Nabugodonosor, 3335
 With tonge unnethe may discryved bee.
 He twyes wan Jerusalem the citee;
 The vessel of the temple he with hym ladde.
 At Babiloigne was his sovereyn see,
 In which his glorie and his delit he hadde. 3340

The faireste children of the blood roial
 Of Israel he leet do gelde anoon,
 And maked ech of hem to been his thral.
 Amonges othere, Daniel was oon,
 That was the wiseste child of everychon; 3345
 For he the dremes of the kyng expounded
 Wheras in Chaldeye clerk ne was ther noon
 That wiste to what fyn hise dremes sowned.

This proude kyng leet maken a statue of gold
 Sixty cubites long, and sevene in brede, 3350
 To which ymage bothe yonge and oold
 Comaunded he to loute and have in drede,
 Or in a fourneys ful of flambes rede
 He shal be brent, that wolde noght obeye.
 But nevere wolde assente to that dede 3355
 • Daniel, ne hise yonge felawes tweye.

This kyng of kynges proud was and elaat;
 He wende, that God that sit in magestee
 Ne myghte hym nat bireve of his estaat;
 But sodeynly he loste his dignytee, 3360
 And lyk a beest hym semed for to bee,
 And eet hey as an oxe and lay theroute;
 In reyn with wilde beestes walked hee
 Til certein tyme was ycome aboute.

And lik an egles fetheres wex his heres, 3365
 Hise nayles lyk a briddes clawes weere,
 Til God relessed hym a certeyn yeres,
 And yaf hym wit, and thanne, with many a teere,
 He thanked God; and evere his lyf in feere
 Was he to doon amys, or moore trespase, 3370
 And til that tyme he leyd was on his beere,
 He knew that God was ful of myght and grace.

Balthasar

His sone which that highte Balthasar,
 That heeld the regne after his fader day,
 He by his fader koude noght be war, 3375
 For proud he was of herte and of array;
 And eek an ydolastre he was ay.
 His hye estaat assured hym in pryde;
 But Fortune caste hym doun and ther he lay,
 And sodeynly his regne gan divide. 3380

A feeste he made unto hise lordes alle
 Upon a tyme, and bad hem blithe bee,
 And thanne hise officeres gan he calle,
 "Gooth, bryngeth forth the vesseles," quod he,
 "Whiche that my fader, in his prosperitee, 3385
 Out of the temple of Jerusalem birafte,
 And to oure hye goddes thanke we
 Of honour, that oure eldres with us lafte."

Hys wyf, hise lordes, and hise concubynes
 Ay dronken, whil hire appetites laste, 3390
 Out of this noble vessels sondry wynes.
 And on a wal this kyng hise eyen caste,
 And saugh an hand armlees that wroot ful faste,
 For feere of which he quook and siked soore.
 This hand, that Balthasar so soore agaste, 3395
 Wroot 'Mane, techel, phares,' and na moore.

In al that land magicien was noon
 That koude expounde what this lettre mente.
 But Daniel expowned it anon,
 And seyde, "Kyng, God to thy fader lente 3400
 Glorie and honour, regne, tresour, rente;
 And he was proud, and nothyng God ne dradde,
 And therfore God greet wreche upon hym sente,
 And hym birafte the regne that he hadde.

He was out-cast of mannes compaignye, 3405
 With asses was his habitacioun,
 And eet hey as a beest in weet and drye,
 Til that he knew by grace and by resoun
 That God of hevene hath domynacioun
 Over every regne and every creature, 3410
 And thanne hadde God of hym compassioun
 And hym restored his regne and his figure.

Eek thou that art his sone art proud also,
 And knowest alle thise thynges verrailly,
 And art rebel to God and art his foo. 3415
 Thou drank eek of hise vessels boldely,
 Thy wyf eek, and thy wenches synfully
 Dronke of the same vessels sondry wynys,
 And heryest false goddes cursedly;
 Therfore to thee yshapen ful greet pyne ys. 3420

This hand was sent from God, that on the wal
 Wroot 'Mane techel phares,' truste me!
 Thy regne is doon, thou weyest noght at al,
 Dyvyded is thy regne, and it shal be
 To Medes and to Perses yeve," quod he. 3425
 And thilke same nyght this kyng was slawe
 And Darius occupyeth his degree,
 Thogh he therto hadde neither right ne lawe.

Lordynges, ensample heer-by may ye take
 How that in lordshipe is no sikernesse; 3430
 For whan Fortune wole a man forsake,
 She bereth away his regne and his richesse,
 And eek hise freendes, bothe moore and lesse,
 For what man that hath freendes thurgh Fortune
 Mishap wol maken hem enemys, as I gesse; 3435
 This proverbe is ful sooth and ful commune.

Cenobia

Cenobia, of Palymerie queene,
 As writen Persiens of hir noblesse,
 So worthy was in armes, and so keene,
 That no wight passed hir in hardynesse, 3440
 Ne in lynage, ne in oother gentillesse.
 Of kynges blood of Perce is she descended.
 I seye nat that she hadde moost fairnesse,
 But of hire shap she myghte nat been amended.

 From hir childhede I fynde that she fledde 3445
 Office of wommen, and to wode she wente,
 And many a wilde hertes blood she shedde
 With arwes brode, that she to hem sente.
 She was so swift that she anon hem hente,
 And whan that she was elder, she wolde kille 3450
 Leouns, leopardes, and beres al to-rente,
 And in hir armes weelde hem at hir wille.

 She dorste wilde beestes dennes seke,
 And rennen in the montaignes al the nyght
 And slepen under the bussh, and she koude eke 3455
 Wrastlen by verray force and verray myght
 With any yong man, were he never so wight;
 Ther myghte nothyng in hir armes stonde.
 She kepte hir maydenhod from every wight,
 To no man deigned hir for to be bonde. 3460

But atte laste hir freendes han hir married
 To Odenake, a prynce of that contree,
 Al were it so that she hem longe taried,
 And ye shul understonde how that he
 Hadde swiche fantasies as hadde she. 3465
 But nathelees, whan they were knyht infeere,
 They lyved in joye and in felicitee,
 For ech of hem hadde oother lief and deere;

Save o thyng, that she wolde nevere assente
 By no wey that he sholde by hir lye 3470
 But ones, for it was hir pleyn entente
 To have a child the world to multiplie;
 And also soone as that she myghte espye
 That she was nat with childe with that dede,
 Thanne wolde she suffre hym doon his fantasye 3475
 Eft-soone and nat but oones, out of drede.

And if she were with childe at thilke cast,
 Namooore sholde he pleyen thilke game
 Til fully fourty dayes weren past;
 Thanne wolde she ones suffre hym do the same. 3480
 Al were this Odenake wilde or tame,
 He gat na moore of hir, for thus she seyde,
 It was to wyves lecheie and shame
 In oother caas, if that men with hem pleyde.

Two sones by this Odenake hadde she, 3485
 The whiche she kepte in vertu and lettrure,
 But now unto oure tale turne we;
 I seye, so worshipful a creature,
 And wys ther-with, and large with mesure,
 So penyble in the werre, and curteis eke, 3490
 Ne moore labour myghte in werre endure,
 Was noon, though al this world men wolde seke.

Hir riche array ne myghte nat be told
 As wel in vessel as in hir clothynge;
 She was al clad in perree and in gold, 3495
 And eek she lafte noght for noon huntyng
 To have of sondry tonges ful knowyng,
 Whan that she leyser hadde, and for to entende
 To lerne bookes was al hire likyng,
 How she in vertu myghte hir lyf dispende. 3500

And shortly of this proces for to trete,
 So doghty was hir housbonde and eek she,
 That they conquered manye regnes grete
 In the orient, with many a faire citee,
 Apertenaunt unto the magestee 3505
 Of Rome, and with strong hond held hem ful faste,
 Ne nevere myghte hir foomen doon hem flee,
 Ay whil that Odenakes dayes laste.

Hir batailles, who-so list hem for to rede,
 Agayn Sapor the kyng and othere mo, 3510
 And how that al this proces fil in dede,
 Why she conquered, and what title had therto,
 And after of hir meschief and hire wo,
 How that she was biseged and ytake,
 Lat hym unto my maister Petrak go, 3515
 That writ ynough of this, I undertake.

Whan Odenake was deed, she myghtily
 The regnes heeld; and with hir propre hond
 Agayn hir foos she faught so cruelly
 That ther nas kyng ne prynce in al that lond 3520
 That he nas glad, if he that grace fond
 That she ne wolde upon his lond werreye.
 With hir they makede alliance by bond
 To been in pees, and let hire ride and pleye.

The Emperour of Rome, Claudius, 3525
 Ne hym bifore, the Romayn Galien,
 Ne dorste nevere been so corageus,
 Ne noon Ermyn, ne noon Egipcien,
 Ne Surrien, ne noon Arabyen,
 With-inne the feeldes that dorste with hir fighte, 3530
 Lest that she wolde hem with hir handes slen,
 Or with hir meignee putten hem to flighte.

In kynges habit wente hir sones two
 As heires of hir fadres regnes alle,
 And Hermanno, and Thymalao 3535
 Hir names were, as Persiens hem calle.
 But ay Fortune hath in hir hony galle;
 This myghty queene may no while endure.
 Fortune out of hir regne made hir falle
 To wrecchednesse and to mysaventure. 3540

Aurelian, whan that the governaunce
 Of Rome cam into hise handes tweye,
 He shoope upon this queene to doon vengeaunce,
 And with hise legions he took his weye
 Toward Cenobie, and shortly for to seye, 3545
 He made hir flee and atte last hir hente,
 And fettred hir, and eek hir children tweye,
 And wan the land, and hoom to Rome he wente.

Amonges othere thynges that he wan,
 Hir chaar, that was with gold wroght and perree, 3550
 This grete Romayn, this Aurelian,
 Hath with hym lad for that men sholde it see.
 Biforen his triumphe walketh shee,
 With gilte cheynes on hir nekke hangynge;
 Coroned was she, after hir degree, 3555
 And ful of perree charged hir clothyng.

Allas, Fortune! she that whilom was
 Dredful to kynges and to emperoures,
 Now gaureth al the peple on hir, allas!
 And she that helmed was in starke shoures 3560
 And wan by force townes stronge and toures
 Shal on hir heed now were a vitremyte,
 And she that bar the ceptre ful of floures
 Shal bere a distaf, hir costes for to quyte.

[The 'modern instances' which follow here, are at the end of the Tale in this MS.]

De Petro Rege Ispannie

O noble, O worthy Petro, glorie of Spayne! 3565
 Whom Fortune heeld so hye in magestee,
 Wel oghten men thy pitous deeth complayne;
 Out of thy land thy brother made thee flee,
 And after at a seege by subtiltee
 Thou were bitraysed, and lad unto his tente 3570
 Where as he with his owene hand slow thee,
 Succedyng in thy regne and in thy rente.

The feeld of snow, with thegle of blak therinne
 Caught with the lymerod, coloured as the gleede,
 He brew this cursednesse and al this synne. 3575
 The wikked nest was werker of this nede,
 Noght Charles Olyvver, that took ay heede
 Of trouthe and honour, but of Armorike
 Genyoun Olyver, corrupt for meede,
 Broghte this worthy kyng in swich a brike. 3580

De Petro Rege de Cipro

O worthy Petro, kyng of Cipre, also,
 That Alisandre wan by heigh maistrie,
 Ful many an hethen wroghtestow ful wo,
 Of which thyne owene liges hadde envye,
 And for nothyng but for thy chivalrie, 3585
 They in thy bed han slayn thee by the morwe.

Thus kan Fortune hir wheel governe and gye,
And out of joye brynge men to sorwe.

De Barnabo de Lumbardia

Off Melan grete Barnabo Viscounte,
God of delit and scourge of Lumbardye, 3590
Why sholde I nat thyn infortune acounte,
Sith in estaat thow cloumbe were so hye?
Thy brother sone, that was thy double allye
For he thy nevew was, and sone-in-lawe,
Withinne his prisoun made thee to dye, 3595
But why, ne how, noot I that thou were slawe.

De Hugelino Comite de Pize

Off the Erl Hugelyn of Pyze the langour
Ther may no tonge telle for pitee.
But litel out of Pize stant a tour,
In whiche tour in prisoun put was he, 3600
And with hym been his litel children thre,
The eldeste scarsly fyf yeer was of age.
Allas, Fortune, it was greet crueltee
Swiche briddes for to putte in swiche a cage!

Dampned was he to dyen in that prisoun, 3605
For Roger, which that Bisshop was of Pize,
Hadde on hym maad a fals suggestioun,
Thurgh which the peple gan upon hym rise,
And putten hym to prisoun in swich wise
As ye han herd, and mete and drynke he hadde 3610
So smal that wel unnethe it may suffise,
And therwithal it was ful povre and hadde.

And on a day bifil, that in that hour
Whan that his mete wont was to be broght,
The gayler shette the dores of the tour; 3615
He herde it wel, but he spak right noght—

And in his herte anon ther fil a thoght,
 That they for hunger wolde doon hym dyen.
 "Allas," quod he, "allas, that I was wroght!"
 Therwith the teeris fillen from hise eyen. 3620

His yonge sone, that thre yeer was of age,
 Unto hym seyde, "Fader, why do ye wepe?
 Whanne wol the gayler bryngen our potage?
 Is ther no morsel breed that ye do kepe?
 I am so hungry that I may nat slepe. 3625
 Now wolde God that I myghte slepen evere!
 Thanne sholde nat hunger in my wombe crepe,
 Ther is nothyng but breed that me were levere."

Thus day by day this child bigan to crye,
 Til in his fadres barm adoun it lay, 3630
 And seyde, "Farewel, fader, I moot dye!"
 And kiste his fader, and dyde the same day.
 And whan the woful fader deed it say,
 For wo hise armes two he gan to byte,
 And seyde, "Allas, Fortune and weylaway! 3635
 Thy false wheel my wo al may I wyte!"

Hise children wende that it for hunger was
 That he his armes gnow, and nat for wo,
 And seyde, "Fader, do nat so, alas!
 But rather ete the flessch upon us two. 3640
 Oure flessch thou yaf us, take our flessch us fro,
 And ete ynogh," right thus they to hym seyde;
 And after that withinne a day or two
 They leyde hem in his lappe adoun, and deyde.

Hymself, despeired, eek for hunger starf, 3645
 Thus ended is this myghty Erl of Pize.
 From heigh estaat Fortune away hym carf,
 Of this tragedie it oghte ynough suffice.

Whoso wol here it in a lenger wise,
 Redeth the grete poete of Ytaille 3650
 That highte Dant, for he kan al devyse
 Fro point to point, nat o word wol he faille.

Nero

Al though that Nero were vicius
 As any feend that lith in helle adoun,
 Yet he, as telleth us Swetonius, 3655
 This wyde world hadde in subjeccioun,
 Bothe Est and West, South and Septemtrioun;
 Of rubies, saphires, and of peerles white
 Were alle hise clothes brouded up and doun,
 For he in gemmes greetly gan delite. 3660

Moore delicaat, moore pompous of array,
 Moore proud was nevere emperour than he.
 That ilke clooth that he hadde wered o day,
 After that tyme he nolde it nevere see.
 Nettes of gold-threed hadde he greet plentee, 3665
 To fisse in Tybre, whan hym liste pleye.
 Hise lustes were al lawe in his decrec,
 For Fortune as his freend hym wolde obeye.

He Rome brende for his delicacie;
 The senatours he slow upon a day, 3670
 To heere how men wolde wepe and crie;
 And slow his brother, and by his suster lay.
 His mooder made he in pitous array,
 For he hir wombe slitte, to biholde
 Wher he conceyved was, so weilaway 3675
 That he so litel of his mooder tolde!

No teere out of hise eyen for that sighte
 Ne cam; but seyde, "A fair womman was she."
 Greet wonder is how that he koude or myghte
 Be domesman of hir dede beautee. 3680

The wyn to bryngen hym comanded he,
 And drank anon; noon oother wo he made,
 Whan myght is joyned unto crueltee,
 Allas, to depe wol the venym wade!

In yowthe a maister hadde this emperour 3685
 To techen hym lettrure and curteisye,
 For of moralitee he was the flour,
 As in his tyme, but if bookes lye.
 And whil this maister hadde of hym maistrye,
 He maked hym so konnyng and so sowple, 3690
 That longe tyme it was, er tirannye
 Or any vice dorste on hym uncowple.

This Seneca, of which that I devyse,
 By-cause Nero hadde of hym swich drede,
 (For he fro vices wolde hym chastise 3695
 Discreetly as by word, and nat by dede)
 "Sire," wolde he seyn, "an emperour moot nede
 Be vertuous and hate tirannye."—
 For which he in a bath made hym to blede
 On bothe hise armes, til he moste dye. 3700

This Nero hadde eek of acustumaunce
 In youthe agayns his maister for to ryse,
 Which afterward hym thoughte greet grevaunce;
 Therefore he made hym dyen in this wise,
 But nathelees, this Seneca the wise 3705
 Chees in a bath to dye in this manere,
 Rather than han anoother tormentise,
 And thus hath Nero slayn his maister deere.

Now fil it so, that Fortune liste no lenger
 The hye pryde of Nero to cherice; 3710
 For though that he was strong, yet was she strengre;
 She thoughte thus, "By God, I am to nyce

To sette a man that is fulfild of vice
 In heigh degree, and emperour hym calle.
 By God, out of his sete I wol hym trice, 3715
 Whan he leest weneth, sonnest shal he falle."

The peple roos upon hym on a nyght
 For his defaute, and whan he it espied
 Out of hise dores anoon he hath hym dight
 Allone, and ther he wende han been allied 3720
 He knocked faste, and ay the moore he cried,
 The faster shette they the dores alle.
 For drede of this hym thoughte that he dyed,
 And wente his wey, no lenger dorste he calle.

The peple cride, and rombled up and down, 3725
 That with his crys herde he how they seyde,
 "Where is this false tiraunt, this Neroun?"
 For fere almoost out of his wit he breyde,
 And to hise goddes pitously he preyde
 For socour, but it myghte nat bityde. 3730
 For drede of this hym thoughte that he deyde,
 And ran into a gardin hym to hyde.

And in this gardyn foond he cherles tweye,
 That seten by a fyr greet and reed,
 And to thise cherles two he gan to preye 3735
 To sleen hym and to girden of his heed,
 That to his body whan that he were deed
 Were no despit ydoon, for his defame.
 Hymself he slow, he koude no bettre reed,
 Of which Fortune lough and hadde a game. 3740

De Oloferno

Was nevere capitayn under a kyng
 That regnes mo putte in subjeccioun,
 Ne strenger was in feeld of alle thyng

As in his tyme, ne gretter of renoun,
 Ne moore pompous in heigh presumpcioun, 3745
 Than Oloferne, which Fortune ay kiste
 So likerously, and ladde hym up and doun
 Til that his heed was of er that he wiste.

Nat oonly that this world hadde hym in awe
 For lesynge of richesse or libertee, 3750
 But he made every man reneyen his lawe.
 "Nabugodonosor was god," seyde hee,
 "Noon oother god sholde adoured bee."
 Agayns his heeste no wight dorste trespace,
 Save in Bethulia, a strong citee, 3755
 Where Eliachim a preest was of that place.

But taak kepe of the deeth of Oloferne;
 Amydde his hoost he dronke lay a nyght,
 Withinne his tente, large as is a berne;
 And yet for al his pompe and al his myght 3760
 Judith, a womman, as he lay upright
 Slepynge, his heed of smoot, and from his tente
 Ful prively she stal from every wight,
 And with his heed unto hir toun she wente.

De Rege Anthiocho illustri

What nedeth it of kyng Anthiochus 3765
 To telle his hye roial magestee,
 His hye pride, hise werkes venymous?
 For swich another was ther noon as he,
 Rede which that he was in Machabee,
 And rede the proude wordes that he seyde, 3770
 And why he fil fro heigh prosperitee,
 And in an hill how wrecchedly he deyde.

Fortune hym hadde enhaunced so in pride
That verrailly he wende he myghte attayne
Unto the sterres upon every syde, .3775
And in balance weyen ech montayne,
And alle the floodes of the see restrayne.
And Goddes peple hadde he moost in hate;
Hem wolde he sleen in torment and in payne,
Wenynge that God ne myghte his pride abate. 3780

And for that Nichanore and Thymothee
Of Jewes weren venquysshed myghtily,
Unto the Jewes swich an hate hadde he
That he bad greithen his chaar ful hastily,
And swoor, and seyde, ful despitously, 3785
Unto Jerusalem he wolde eft-soone,
To wreken his ire on it ful cruelly;
But of his purpos he was let ful soone.

God for his manace hym so soore smoot
With invisible wounde, ay incurable, 3790
That in hise guttes carf it so and boot
That hise peynes weren importable.
And certainly, the wreche was resonable,
For many a mannes guttes dide he peyne,
But from his purpos cursed and dampnable 3795
For al his smert he wolde hym nat restreyne;

But bad anon apparaillen his hoost,
And sodeynly, er he was of it war,
God daunted al his pride and al his boost,
For he so soore fil out of his char, 3800
That it hise lemes and his skyn totar,
So that he neyther myghte go ne ryde,
But in a chayer men aboute hym bar
Al forbrused, bothe bak and syde.

The wreche of God hym smoot so cruelly 3805
 That thurgh his body wikked wormes crepte;
 And therwithal he stank so horribly
 That noon of al his meynee that hym kepte
 Wheither so he wook or ellis slepte,
 Ne myghte nought for stynk of hym endure. 3810
 In this meschief he wayled and eek wepte,
 And knew God lord of every creature.

To all his hoost and to hymself also
 Ful wlatson was the stynk of his careyne,
 No man ne myghte hym bere to ne fro, 3815
 And in this stynk and this horrible peyne
 He starf ful wrecchedly in a monteyne.
 Thus hath this robbour and this homycide,
 That many a man made to wepe and pleyne,
 Swich gerdoun as bilongeth unto pryde. 3820

De Alexandro

The storie of Alisaundre is so commune
 That every wight that hath discrecioun
 Hath herd somewhat or al of his fortune.
 This wyde world, as in conclusioun,
 He wan by strengthe, or for his hye renoun 3825
 They weren glad for pees unto hym sende.
 The pride of man and beest he leyde adoun
 Wher-so he cam, unto the worldes ende.

Comparison myghte nevere yet been maked
 Bitwixen hym and another conquerour, 3830
 For al this world for drede of hym hath quaked.
 He was of knyghthod and of fredom flour,
 Fortune hym made the heir of hir honour.
 Save wyn and wommen nothyng myghte aswage
 His hye entente in armes and labour, 3835
 So was he ful of leonyn corage.

What pris were it to hym, though I yow tolde
 Of Darius, and an hundred thousand mo,
 Of kynges, princes, erles, dukes bolde,
 Whiche he conquered and broghte hem into wo? 3840
 I seye, as,fer as man may ryde or go,
 The world was his, what sholde I moore devyse?
 For though I write or tolde yow everemo,
 Of his knyghthode it myghte nat suffise.

Twelf yeer he regned, as seith Machabee, 3845
 Philippes sone of Macidoyne he was,
 That first was kyng in Grece the contree.
 O worthy gentil Alisandre, allas,
 That evere sholde fallen swich a cas!
 Empoysoned of thyn owene folk thou weere; 3850
 Thy sys Fortune hath turned into aas
 And yet for thee ne weep she never a teere.

Who shal me yeven teeris to compleyne
 The deeth of gentillesse and of franchise,
 That al the world weilded in his demeyne? 3855
 And yet hym thoughte it myghte nat suffise,
 So ful was his corage of heigh emprise.
 Allas, who shal me helpe to endite
 False Fortune, and poyson to despise,
 The whiche two of al this wo I wyte? 3860

De Julio Cesare

By wisdom, manhede, and by gret labour
 From humble bed to roial magestee
 Up roos he, Julius the conquerour,
 That wan al thoccident by land and see
 By strengthe of hand, or elles by treetee, 3865
 And unto Rome made hem tributarie;
 And sitthe of Rome the emperour was he,
 Til that Fortune weex his adversarie.

O myghty Cesar, that in Thessalie
 Agayn Pompeus, fader thyn in lawe, 3870
 That of the Orient hadde al the chivalrye
 As fer as that the day bigynneth dawe,
 Thou thurgh thy knyghthod hast hem take and slawe,
 Save fewe folk that with Pompeus fledde,
 Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in awe, 3875
 Thanke Fortune, that so wel thee spedde!

But now a litel while I wol biwaille
 This Pompeus, this noble governour
 Of Rome, which that fleigh at this bataille,
 I seye, oon of hise men, a fals traitour, 3880
 His heed of-smoot to wynnen hym favour
 Of Julius, and hym the heed he broghte;
 Allas, Pompeye, of thorient conquerour,
 That Fortune unto swich a fyn thee broghte!

To Rome agayn repaireth Julius, 3885
 With his triumphe lauriat ful hye;
 But on a tyme Brutus Cassius
 That evere hadde of his hye staat envye,
 Ful prively hath maad conspiracye
 Agayns this Julius in subtil wise, 3890
 And caste the place in which he sholde dye
 With boydekyns, as I shal yow devyse.

This Julius to the Capitolie wente
 Upon a day, as he was wont to goon;
 And in the Capitolie anon hym hente 3895
 This false Brutus and his othere foon,
 And stiked hym with boydekyns anoon
 With many a wounde; and thus they lete hym lye.
 But nevere gronte he at no strook but oon,
 Or elles at two, but if his storie lye. 3900

So manly was this Julius of herte
 And so wel lovede estaatly honestee,
 That though hise deedly woundes soore smerte,
 His mantel over hise hypes caste he,
 For no man sholde seen his privetee. 3905
 And as he lay of diyng in a traunce,
 And wiste verrailly that deed was hee,
 Of honestee yet hadde he remembraunce.

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende,
 And to Sweton, and to Valerie also, 3910
 That of this storie writen word and ende,
 How that to thise grete conqueroures two
 Fortune was first freend, and sitthe foo.
 No man ne truste upon hire favour longe
 But have hir in awayt for evere moo! 3915
 Witnesse on alle thise conqueroures stronge.

Cresus

This riche Cresus whilom kyng of Lyde,
 Of whiche Cresus Cirus soore hym dradde,
 Yet was he caught amyddes al his pryde,
 And to be brent men to the fyr hym ladde. 3920
 But swich a reyn down fro the welkne shadde
 That slow the fyr, and made hym to escape;
 But to be war no grace yet he hadde,
 Til Fortune on the galwes made hym gape.

Whanne he escaped was, he kan nat stente 3925
 For to bigynne a newe werre agayn;
 He wende wel, for that Fortune hym sente
 Swich hap that he escaped thurgh the rayn,
 That of hise foos he myghte nat be slayn;
 And eek a swevene upon a nyght he mette, 3930
 Of which he was so proud and eek so fayn
 That in vengeance he al his herte sette.

Upon a tree he was, as that hym thoughte,
 Ther Jupiter hym wessh bothe bak and syde,
 And Phebus eek a fair towaille hym broughte, 3935
 To dryen hym with; and therfore wax his pryde,
 And to his doghter that stood hym bisyde,
 Which that he knew in heigh science habounde,
 He bad hir telle hym what it signyfyde,
 And she his dreem bigan right thus expounde. 3940

"The tree," quod she, "the galwes is to meene,
 And Juppiter bitokneth snow and reyn,
 And Phebus with his towaille so clene,
 Tho been the sonne stremes for to seyn.
 Thou shalt anhangd be, fader, certeyn; 3945
 Reyn shal thee wasshe, and sonne shal thee drye."
 Thus warnede hym ful plat and ful pleyn,
 His doghter, which that called was Phanye.

Anhangd was Cresus, the proude kyng,
 His roial trone myghte hym nat availle. 3950
 Tragedie is noon oother maner thyng,
 Ne kan in syngyng crye ne biwaille,
 But for that Fortune alwey wole assaille
 With unwar strook the regnes that been proude;
 For whan men trusteth hir, thanne wol she faille, 3955
 And covere hir brighte face with a clowde.

3944 *stremes* bemes. 3947 warned. 3951 Tragedies. 3953 *for om*

Explicit Tragedia.

Heere stynteth the Knyght the Monk of his tale.

PROLOGUE TO THE NONNES PREESTES TALE

The Prologue of the Nonnes Preestes Tale.

“Hoo!” quod the Knyght, “good sire, namoore of this,
That ye han seyð is right ynough, ywis,
And muchel moore, for litel hevynesse
Is right ynough to muche folk, I gesse. 3960
I seye for me, it is a greet disese
Where as men han been in greet welthe and ese,
To heeren of hir sodeyn fal, alas!
And the contrarie is joye and greet solas,
As whan a man hath been in povre estaat, 3965
And clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,
And there abideth in prosperitee.
Swich thyng is gladsom, as it thynketh me,
And of swich thyng were goodly for to telle.”
“Ye,” quod our Hoost, “by seinte Poules belle, 3970
Ye seye right sooth! This Monk, he clappeth lowde,
He spak, how Fortune covered with a clowde—
I noot nevere what—and also of a ‘Tragedie’—
Right now ye herde; and pardee, no remedie
It is for to biwaille ne compleyne 3975
That that is doon; and als it is a peyne,
As ye han seyð, to heere of hevynesse.
Sire Monk, namoore of this, so God yow blesse!
Youre tale anoyeth al this compaignye;
Swich talkyng is nat worth a boterflye, 3980
For ther-inne is ther no desport ne game.
Wherfore sir Monk, or daun Piers by youre name,
I pray yow hertely, telle us somewhat elles,
For sikerly, nere clynkyng of youre belles

- That on your bridel hange on every syde, 3985
 By hevene kyng, that for us alle dyde,
 I sholde er this han fallen doun for sleepe,
 Although the slough had never been so deepe;
 Thanne hadde your tale al be toold in veyn.
 For, certainly, as that thise clerkes seyn, 3990
 Where as a man may have noon audience,
 Noght helpeth it to tellen his sentence.
 And wel I woot the substance is in me,
 If any thyng shal wel reported be.
 Sir, sey somewhat of huntyng, I yow preye." 3995
 "Nay," quod this Monk, "I have no lust to pleye;
 Not lat another telle as I have toold."
 Thanne spakoure Hoost, with rude speche and boold,
 And seyde unto the Nonnes Preest anon,
 "Com neer, thou preest, com hyder, thou, sir John, 4000
 Telle us swich thyng as mayoure hertes glade;
 Be blithe, though thou ryde upon a jade.
 What thogh thyn hors be bothe foul and lene?
 If he wol serve thee, rekke nat a bene!
 Looke that thyn herte be murie everemo." 4005
 "Yis sir," quod he, "yis, Hoost, so moot I go,
 But I be myrie, ywis, I wol be blamed."
 And right anon his tale he hath attamed,
 And thus he seyde unto us everichon,
 This sweetc preest, this goodly man sir John. 4010

THE NONNES PREESTES TALE

Heere bigynneth the Nonnes Preestes tale of the Cok and Hen, Chauntecleer and Pertelote.

A povre wydwe, somdel stape in age,
Was whilom dwellyng in a narwe cotage
Beside a greve, stondynge in a dale.
This wydwe, of which I telle yow my tale,
Syn thilke day that she was last a wyf, 4015
In pacience ladde a ful symple lyf,
For litel was hir catel and hir rente.
By housbondrie, of swich as God hir sente,
She foond herself and eek hire doghtren two.
Thre large sowes hadde she, and namo, 4020
Three keen, and eek a sheep that highte Malle.
Ful sooty was hir bour and eek hire halle,
In which she eet ful many a sklendre meel—
Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.
No deyntee morsel passed thurgh hir throte, 4025
Hir diete was accordant to hir cote.
Repleccioun ne made hir nevere sik,
Attempree diete was al hir phisik,
And exercise, and hertes suffisaunce.
The goute lette hir nothyng for to daunce, 4030
Napoplexie shente nat hir heed.
No wyn ne drank she, neither whit ne reed,
Hir bord was served moost with whit and blak,
Milk and broun breed, in which she foond no lak,
Seynd bacoun, and somtyme an ey or tweye, 4035
For she was as it were a maner deye.
A yeerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute
With stikkes, and a drye dych withoute,
In which she hadde a Cok, heet Chauntecleer,
In al the land of crowyng nas his peer. 4040

His voys was murier than the murie orgon
 On messedayes, that in the chirche gon.
 Wel sikerer was his crowyng in his logge,
 Than is a klokke, or an abbey orlogge.
 By nature he crew eche ascencioun 4045
 Of the equynoxial in thilke toun;
 For whan degrees fiftene weren ascended,
 Thanne crew he, that it myghte nat been amended.
 His coomb was redder than the fyn coral,
 And batailled, as it were a castel wal. 4050
 His byle was blak, and as the jeet it shoon,
 Lyk asure were hise legges and his toon,
 Hise nayles whiter than the lylle flour,
 And lyk the burned gold was his colour.
 This gentil cok hadde in his governaunce 4055
 Sevene hennes, for to doon al his plesaunce,
 Whiche were hise sustres and his paramours,
 And wonder lyk to hym as of colours;
 Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir throte
 Was cleped faire damoysele Pertelote. 4060
 Curteys she was, discreet, and debonaire
 And compaignable, and bar hyrself so faire
 Syn thilke day that she was seven nyght oold,
 That trewely she hath the herte in hoold
 Of Chauntecleer loken in every lith. 4065
 He loved hir so, that wel was hym therwith.
 But swiche a joye was it to here hem synge
 Whan that the brighte sonne gan to sprynge,
 In sweete accord, "My lief is faren in londe,"—
 For thilke tyme, as I have understonde, 4070
 Beestes and briddes koude speke and synge.
 And so bifel, that in the dawenyng,
 As Chauntecleer, among hise wyves alle,
 Sat on his perche, that was in the halle,
 And next hym sat this faire Pertelote, 4075

This Chauntecleer gan gronen in his throte
 As man that in his dreem is drecched soore.
 And whan that Pertelote thus herde hym roore
 She was agast, and seyde, "O herte deere,
 What eyleth yow, to grone in this manere? 4080
 Ye been a verray sleper, fy for shame!"
 And he answerde and seyde thus, "Madame,
 I pray yow that ye take it nat agrief.
 By God, me thoughte I was in swich meschief
 Right now, that yet myn herte is soore afright. 4085
 Now God," quod he, "my swevene recche aright,
 And kepe my body out of foul prisoun.
 Me mette how that I romed up and doun
 Withinne our yeerd, wheer as I saugh a beest
 Was lyk an hound, and wolde han maad areest 4090
 Upon my body, and han had me deed.
 His colour was bitwixe yelow and reed,
 And tipped was his tayl and bothe hise eeris
 With blak, unlyk the remenant of hise heeris;
 His snowte smal, with glowynge eyen tweye. 4095
 Yet of his look, for feere almoost I deye!
 This caused me my gronyng, doutelees."
 "Avoy!" quod she, "Fy on yow hertelees!
 Allas," quod she, "for by that God above
 Now han ye lost myn herte and al my love! 4100
 I kan nat love a coward, by my feith,
 For certes, what so any womman seith,
 We alle desiren, if it myghte bee,
 To han housbondes hardy, wise, and free,
 And secree, and no nygard, ne no fool, 4105
 Ne hym that is agast of every tool,
 Ne noon avauntour; by that God above,
 How dorste ye seyn for shame unto youre love
 That any thyng myghte make yow aferd?
 Have ye no mannes herte, and han a berd? 4110
 Allas, and konne ye been agast of swevenys?

No thyng, God woot, but vanitee in swevene is!
 Swevenes engendren of replecciouns,
 And ofte of fume and of complecciouns,
 Whan humours been to habundant in a wight. 4115
 Certes, this dreem which ye han met tonyght
 Cometh of greet superfluytee
 Of youre rede colera, pardee,
 Which causeth folk to dreden in hir dremes
 Of arwes, and of fyre with rede lemes, 4120
 Of grete beestes, that they wol hem byte,
 Of contekes, and of whelpes grete and lyte;
 Right as the humour of malencolie
 Causeth ful many a man in sleep to crie
 For feere of blake beres, or boles blake, 4125
 Or elles blake develes wole hem take.
 Of othere humours koude I telle also
 That werken many a man in sleep ful wo,
 But I wol passe as lightly as I kan.
 Lo Catoun, which that was so wys a man, 4130
 Seyde he nat thus, 'ne do no fors of dremes'?
 Now, sire," quod she, "whan ye flee fro the bemes,
 For goddes love as taak som laxatyf!
 Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,
 I conseilte yow the beste, I wol nat lye, 4135
 That bothe of colere and of malencolye
 Ye purge yow; and for ye shal nat tarie,
 Though in this toun is noon apothecarie,
 I shal myself to herbes techen yow,
 That shul been for youre hele and for youre prow. 4140
 And in oure yeerd tho herbes shal I fynde,
 The whiche han of hir propretee by kynde
 To purge yow bynethe and eek above.
 Foryet nat this, for Goddes owene love!
 Ye been ful coleryk of compleccioun; 4145
 Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
 Ne fynde yow nat repleet of humours hoote.

And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote
 That ye shul have a fevere terciane,
 Or an agu that may be youre bane. 4150

A day or two ye shul have digestyves
 Of wormes, er ye take youre laxatyves
 Of lawriol, centaure, and fumetere,
 Or elles of ellebor that groweth there,
 Of katapuce, or of gaitrys beryis, 4155
 Of herbe yve, growyng in oure yeerd, ther mery is!
 Pekke hem up right as they growe, and ete hem yn!
 Be myrie, housbonde, for youre fader kyn,
 Dredeth no dreem, I kan sey yow namoore!"

"Madame," quod he, "graunt mercy of youre loore, 4160

But nathelees, as touchyng Daun Catoun,
 That hath of wysdom swich a greet renoun,
 Though that he bad no dremes for to drede,
 By God, men may in olde bookes rede
 Of many a man moore of auctorite 4165

Than evere Caton was, so moot I thee,
 That al the revers seyn of this sentence,
 And han wel founden by experience
 That dremes been significaciouns
 As wel of joye as of tribulaciouns 4170

That folk enduren in this lif present.
 Ther nedeth make of this noon argument,
 The verray preeve sheweth it in dede.
 Oon of the gretteste auctours that men rede
 Seith thus, that whilom two felawes wente 4175

On pilgrimage in a ful good entente;
 And happed so, they coomen in a toun
 Wher as ther was swich congregacioun
 Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergage,
 That they ne founde as muche as o cotage 4180
 In which they bothe myghte logged bee;
 Wherefore they mosten of necessitee

As for that nyght departen compaignye,
 And ech of hem gooth to his hostelrye,
 And took his loggyng as it wolde falle. 4185
 That oon of hem was logged in a stalle,
 Fer in a yeerd, with oxen of the plough;
 That oother man was logged wel ynough,
 As was his aventure or his fortune,
 That us governeth alle as in commune. 4190

And so bifel, that longe er it were day
 This man mette in his bed, ther as he lay,
 How that his felawe gan upon hym calle
 And seyde, 'Allas, for in an oxes stalle
 This nyght I shal be mordred, ther I lye! 4195
 Now help me, deere brother, or I dye;
 In alle haste com to me!' he sayde.

This man out of his sleep for feere abrayde;
 But whan that he was wakened of his sleep,
 He turned hym and took of it no keep. 4200

Hym thoughte, his dreem nas but a vanitee.
 Thus twies in his slepyng dremed hee,
 And atte thridde tyme yet his felawe
 Cam, as hym thoughte, and seide, 'I am now slawe,
 Bihoold my bloody woundes depe and wyde; 4205

Arys up erly in the morwe-tyde,
 And at the west gate of the toun,' quod he,
 'A carte ful of donge ther shaltow se,
 In which my body is hid ful prively.
 Do thilke carte arresten boldely; 4210

My gold caused my mordre, sooth to sayn.'—
 And tolde hym every point, how he was slayn,
 With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe;
 And truste wel, his dreem he foond ful trewe.
 For on the morwe, as soone as it was day, 4215

To his felawes in he took the way,
 And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,
 After his felawe he bigan to calle.

The hostiler answerde hym anon,
And seyde, 'Sire, your felawe is agon, 4220
As soone as day he wente out of the toun.'
This man gan fallen in suspeciou, n,
Remembrynge on hise dremes that he mette,
And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he lette,
Unto the westgate of the toun; and fond 4225
A dong carte, as it were to donge lond,
That was arrayed in that same wise,
As ye han herd the dede man devyse.
And with an hardy herte he gan to crye,
'Vengeance and justice of this felonye; 4230
My felawe mordred is this same nyght,
And in this carte he lith gapyng upright.
I crye out on the ministres,' quod he,
'That sholden kepe and reulen this citee!
Harrow! allas, heere lith my felawe slayn!' 4235
What sholde I moore unto this tale sayn?
The peple out-sterte, and caste the cart to grounde,
And in the myddel of the dong they founde
The dede man, that mordred was al newe.
O blisful God, that art so just and trewe! 4240
Lo, howe that thou biwreyest mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that se we, day by day.
Mordre is so wlatsom and abhomynable
To God that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled be, 4245
Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or thre.
Mordre wol out, this my conclusioun.
And right anon ministres of that toun
Han hent the carter, and so soore hym pynded,
And eek the hostiler so soore engyned 4250
That they biknewe hire wikkednesse anon,
And were anhangid by the nekke bon.
Heere may men seen, that dremes been to drede!
And certes, in the same book I rede

Right in the nexte chapitre after this— 4255
 I gabbe nat, so have I joye or blis—
 Two men that wolde han passed over see
 For certeyn cause, into a fer contree,
 If that the wynd ne hadde been contrarie,
 That made hem in a citee for to tarie, 4260
 That stood ful myrie upon an haven-syde—
 But on a day, agayn the even-tyde,
 The wynd gan chaunge, and blew right as hem leste.
 Jolif and glad they wente unto hir reste,
 And casten hem ful erly for to saille, 4265
 But herkneth, to that o man fil a greet mervaille;
 That oon of hem, in slepyng as he lay,
 Hym mette a wonder dreem agayn the day.
 Hym thoughte a man stood by his beddes syde,
 And hym comanded that he sholde abyde, 4270
 And seyde hym thus, 'If thou tomorwe wende
 Thow shalt be dreynt; my tale is at an ende.'
 He wook, and tolde his felawe what he mette,
 And preyde hym his viage for to lette,
 As for that day, he preyede hym to byde. 4275
 His felawe, that lay by his beddes syde,
 Gan for to laughe and scorned him ful faste.
 'No dreem,' quod he, 'may so myn herte agaste
 That I wol lette for to do my thynges.
 I sette nat a straw by thy dremynges, 4280
 For swevenes been but vanytees and japes.
 Men dreme al day of owles or of apes,
 And of many a maze therwithal.
 Men dreme of thyng that nevere was, ne shal;
 But sith I see that thou wolt heere abyde 4285
 And thus forslawthen wilfully thy tyde,
 God woot it reweth me, and have good day.'
 And thus he took his leve and wente his way;
 But er that he hadde half his cours yseyled,

Noot I nat why, ne what myschaunce it eyled,
 But casuelly the shippes botme rente,
 And ship and men under the water wente
 In sighte of othere shippes it bisyde,
 That with hem seyled at the same tyde.
 And therfore, faire Pertelote so deere,
 By swiche ensamples olde yet maistow leere,
 That no man sholde been to recchelees
 Of dremes, for I seye thee doutelees
 That many a dreem ful soore is for to drede.

Lo, in the lyf of Seint Kenelm I rede,
 That was Kenulphus sone, the noble kyng,
 Of Mercenrike how Kenelm mette a thyng.
 A lite er he was mordred, on a day
 His mordre in his avysioun he say.
 His norice hym expowned every deel
 His swevene, and bad hym for to kepe hym weel
 For traisoun, but he nas but seven yeer oold,
 And therfore litel tale hath he toold
 Of any dreem, so hooly is his herte.
 By God, I hadde levere than my sherte
 That ye hadde rad his legende, as have I.
 Dame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,
 Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun
 In Affrike of the worthy Cipoun,
 Affermeth dremes, and seith that they been
 Warnynge of thynges, that men after seen.
 And forther-moore I pray yow looketh wel
 In the olde testament of Daniel,
 If he heeld dremes any vanitee!
 Reed eek of Joseph, and ther shul ye see
 Wher dremes be somtyme, I sey nat alle,
 Warnynge of thynges that shul after falle.
 Looke of Egipte the kyng, daun Pharao,
 His baker and his butiller also,

Wher they ne felte noon effect in dremes ! 4325
 Whoso wol seken actes of sondry remes
 May rede of dremes many a wonder thyng.
 Lo Cresus, which that was of Lyde kyng,
 Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,
 Which signified, he sholde anhangd bee? 4330
 Lo here Adromacha, Ectores wyf,
 That day that Ector sholde lese his lyf
 She dremed on the same nyght biforn
 How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn,
 If thilke day he wente into bataille. 4335
 She warned hym, but it myghte nat availle;
 He wente for to fighte natheles,
 But he was slayn anon of Achilles.
 But thilke is al to longe for to telle,
 And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle. 4340
 Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun,
 That I shal han of this avisioun
 Adversitee, and I seye forthermoor
 That I ne telle of laxatyves no stoor,
 For they been venymes, I woot it weel, 4345
 I hem diffye, I love hem never a deel.
 Now let us speke of myrthe, and stynte al this;
 Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,
 Of o thyng God hath sent me large grace,
 For whan I se the beautee of youre face, 4350
 Ye been so scarlet reed aboute youre eyen,
 It maketh al my drede for to dyen.
 For, al so siker as In principio
 Mulier est hominis confusio,—
 Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is, 4355
 ‘Womman is mannes joye and al his blis.’
 For whan I feele a-nyght your softe syde,
 Al be it that I may nat on yow ryde,
 For that oure perche is maad so narwe, allas!
 I am so ful of joye and of solas, 4360

That I diffye bothe swevene and dreem."
 And with that word he fly doun fro the beam,
 For it was day, and eke hise hennes alle;
 And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
 For he hadde founde a corn lay in the yerd. 4365
 Real he was, he was namoore aferd;
 And fethered Pertelote twenty tyme,
 And trad as ofte, er that it was pryme.
 He looketh as it were a grym leoun,
 And on hise toos he rometh up and doun, 4370
 Hym deigned nat to sette his foot to grounde.
 He chukketh whan he hath a corn yfounde,
 And to hym rennen thanne hise wyves alle.
 Thus roial as a prince is in an halle,
 Leve I this Chauntecleer in his pasture, 4375
 And after wol I telle his aventure.

Whan that the monthe in which the world bigan
 That highte March, whan God first maked man,
 Was compleet, and passed were also
 Syn March bigan, thritty dayes and two, 4380
 Bifel that Chauntecleer in al his pryde,
 Hise sevene wyves walkynge by his syde,
 Caste up hise eyen to the brighte sonne,
 That in the signe of Taurus hadde yronne
 Twenty degrees and oon, and somewhat moore; 4385
 And knew by kynde, and by noon oother loore,
 That it was pryme, and crew with blisful stevene.
 "The sonne," he seyde, "is clomben upon hevne
 Fourty degrees and oon, and moore, ywis.
 Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis, 4390
 Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they synge,
 And se the fresshe floures how they sprynge.
 Ful is myn herte of revel and solas."
 But sodeynly hym fil a sorweful cas,
 For evere the latter ende of joye is wo. 4395

God woot that worldly joye is spoone ago,
 And if a rethor koude faire endite,
 He in a cronycle saufly myghte it write,
 As for a sovereyn notabilitee.
 Now every wys man, lat him herkne me: 4400
 This storie is al so trewe, I undertake,
 As is the book of Launcelot de Lake,
 That wommen holde in ful greet reverence.
 Now wol I come agayn to my sentence.
 A colfox, ful of sly iniquitee, 4405
 That in the grove hadde wonned yeres three,
 By heigh ymaginacioun forn-cast,
 The same nyght thurghout the hegges brast
 Into the yerd, ther Chauntecleer the faire
 Was wont, and eek hise wyves, to repaire; 4410
 And in a bed of wortes stille he lay,
 Til it was passed undren of the day,
 Waitynge his tyme on Chauntecleer to falle,
 As gladly doon thise homycides alle
 That in await liggien to mordre men. 4415
 O false mordrour, lurkyng in thy den!
 O newe Scariot! newe Genyloun!
 False dissymulour, O Greek Synoun
 That broghtest Troye al outrelly to sorwe!
 O Chauntecleer, acursed be that morwe 4420
 That thou into that yerd flaugh fro the bemes!
 Thou were ful wel ywarned by thy dremes
 That thilke day was perilous to thee;
 But what that God forwoot moot nedes bee,
 After the opinioun of certein clerkis. 4425
 Witnesse on hym, that any parfit clerk is,
 That in scole is greet altercacioun
 In this mateere, and greet disputisoun,
 And hath been of an hundred thousand men;—
 But I ne kan nat bulte it to the bren, 4430
 As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn,

Or Boece or the Bisshop Bradwardyn,—
 Wheither that Goddes worthy forwityng
 Streyneth me nedefully to doon a thyng,
 (Nedely clepe I symple necessitee) 4435

Or elles, if free choys be graunted me
 To do that same thyng, or do it noght,
 Though God forwoot it, er that it was wrought;
 Or if his wityng streyneth never a deel
 But by necessitee condicioneel,— 4440

I wil nat han to do of swich mateere;
 My tale is of a Cok, as ye may heere,
 That took his conseil of his wyf, with sorwe,
 To walken in the yerd, upon that morwe
 That he hadde met that dreem, that I of tolde. 4445

Wommennes conseils been ful ofte colde;
 Wommannes conseil broghte us first to wo,
 And made Adam fro Paradys to go,
 Ther as he was ful myrie, and wel at ese.
 But for I noot to whom it myght displese, 4450
 If I conseil of wommen wolde blame,
 Passe over, for I seye it in my game. ↵

Rede auctours, wher they trete of swich mateere,
 And what they seyn of wommen ye may heere.
 Thise been the cokkes wordes, and nat myne, 4455
 I kan noon harm of no womman divyne.

Faire in the soond, to bathe hire myrily,
 Lith Pertelote, and alle hir sustres by,
 Agayn the sonne; and Chauntecleer so free
 Soong murier than the mermayde in the see— 4460
 For Phisiologus seith sikerly
 How that they syngen wel and myrily.

And so bifel, that as he cast his eye
 Among the wortes on a boterflye,
 He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe. 4465
 Nothyng ne liste hym thanne for to crowe,

But cride anon, "cok! cok!" and up he sterte,
 As man that was affrayed in his herte.
 For natureelly a beest desireth flee
 Fro his contrarie, if he may it see, 4470
 Though he never erst hadde seyn it with his eye.
 This Chauntecleer, whan he gan hym espye,
 He wolde han fled, but that the fox anon
 Seyde, "Gentil sire, allas, wher wol ye gon?
 Be ye affrayed of me that am youre freend? 4475
 Now certes, I were worse than a feend
 If I to yow wolde harm or vileynye.
 I am nat come your conseil for tespye,
 But trewely, the cause of my comynge
 Was oonly for to herkne how that ye synge. 4480
 For trewely, ye have as myrie a stevene
 As any aungel hath that is in hevene.
 Therwith ye han in musyk moore feelynge
 Than hadde Boece, or any that kan synge.
 My lord youre fader—God his soule blesse!— 4485
 And eek youre mooder, of hir gentillesse
 Han in myn hous ybeen, to my greet ese;
 And certes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow plese.
 But for men speke of syngyng, I wol seye,
 So moote I brouke wel myne eyen tweye, 4490
 Save yow I herde nevere man yet synge
 As dide youre fader in the morwentyng.
 Certes, it was of herte al that he song!
 And for to make his voys the moore strong,
 He wolde so peyne hym, that with bothe hise eyen 4495
 He moste wynke, so loude he wolde cryen,
 And stonden on his tiptoon therwithal,
 And strecche forth his nekke long and smal.
 And eek he was of swich discrecioun,
 That ther nas no man in no regioun, 4500
 That hym in song or wisdom myghte passe.

I have wel rad in daun Burnel the Asse
 Among hise vers, how that ther was a cok,
 For that a preestes sone yaf hym a knok,
 Upon his leg, whil he was yong and nyce, 4505
 He made hym for to lese his benefice.

But certeyn, ther nys no comparisoun
 Bitwixe the wisdom and discrecioun
 Of youre fader, and of his subtiltee.
 Now syngeth, sire, for seinte charitee, 4510
 Lat se konne ye youre fader countrefete!"

This Chauntecleer hise wynges gan to bete,
 As man that koude his traysoun nat espie,
 So was he ravysshed with his flaterie.

Allas, ye lordes! many a fals flatour 4515
 Is in youre courtes, and many a losengeour,
 That plesen yow wel moore, by my feith,
 Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow seith.
 Redeth Ecclesiaste of Flaterye;

Beth war, ye lordes, of hir trecherye. 4520

This Chauntecleer stood hye upon his toos,
 Strecchyng his nekke, and heeld hise eyen cloos,
 And gan to crowe loude for the nones,
 And daun Russell the fox stirte up atones,
 And by the gargat hente Chauntecleer, 4525
 And on his bak toward the wode hym beer,
 For yet ne was ther no man that hym sewed.

O destinee, that mayst nat been eschewed!
 Allas, that Chauntecleer fleigh fro the bemes!
 Allas, his wyf ne roghte nat of dremes! 4530
 And on a Friday fil al this meschaunce.

O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce!
 Syn that thy servant was this Chauntecleer,
 And in thy servyce dide al his poweer,
 Moore for delit, than world to multiplie, 4535
 Why woltestow suffre hym on thy day to dye?
 O Gaufred, deere Maister soverayn!

That whan thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn
 With shot, compleynedest his deeth so soore,
 Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy loore, 4540
 The Friday for to chide, as diden ye?—
 For on a Friday soothly slayn was he.
 Thanne wolde I shewe yow, how that I koude pleyne
 For Chauntecleres drede and for his peyne.
 Certes, swich cry ne lamentacioun 4545
 Was nevere of ladyes maad, whan Ylioun
 Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd,
 Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam by the berd,
 And slayn hym, as seith us Eneydos,
 As maden alle the hennes in the clos, 4550
 Whan they had seyn of Chauntecleer the sighte.
 But sovereynly dame Pertelote shrighte
 Ful louder than dide Hasdrubales wyf,
 Whan that hir housbonde hadde lost his lyf,
 And that the Romainys hadde brend Cartage; 4555
 She was so ful of torment and of rage
 That wilfully into the fyr she sterte,
 And brende hirselves with a stedefast herte.
 O woful hennes, right so criden ye,
 As whan that Nero brende the Citee 4560
 Of Rome, cryden senatoures wyves,
 For that hir husbondes losten alle hir lyves,
 Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn.
 Now I wole turne to my tale agayn.
 This sely wydwe, and eek hir doghtres two, 4565
 Herden thise hennes crie, and maken wo,
 And out at dores stirten they anon,
 And syen the fox toward the grove gon,
 And bar upon his bak the cok away;
 And cryden, "Out! harrow! and weylaway! 4570
 Ha! ha! the fox!" and after hym they ran,
 And eek with staves many another man,

Ran Colle, oure dogge, and Talbot, and Gerland,
 And Malkyn with a dystaf in hir hand,
 Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray hogges, 4575
 So were they fered for berkyng of the dogges,
 And shoutyng of the men and wommen eek,
 They ronne so, hem thoughte hir herte breek;
 They yolliden as feendes doon in helle,
 The dokes cryden as men wolde hem quelle, 4580
 The gees for feere flowen over the trees,
 Out of the hyve cam the swarm of bees,
 So hydous was the noyse, a! benedicitee!
 Certes, he Jakke Straw and his meynee
 Ne made nevere shoutes half so shille, 4585
 Whan that they wolden any Flemyng kille,
 As thilke day was maad upon the fox.
 Of bras they broghten bemes and of box,
 Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe and powped,
 And therwithal they skriked and they howped, 4590
 It seemed as that hevene sholde falle!
 Now, goode men, I pray yow, herkneth alle.
 Lo, how Fortune turneth sodeynly
 The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy!
 This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak, 4595
 In al his drede unto the fox he spak,
 And seyde, "Sire, if that I were as ye,
 Yet wolde I seyn, as wys God helpe me,
 'Turneth agayn, ye proude cherles alle,
 A verray pestilence upon yow falle! 4600
 Now am I come unto the wodes syde,
 Maugree youre heed, the cok shal heere abyde,
 I wol hym ete, in feith, and that anon.'"
 The fox answerde, "In feith, it shal be don."
 And as he spak that word, al sodeynly 4605
 This cok brak from his mouth delyverly,
 And heighe upon a tree he fleigh anon.

And whan the fox saugh that he was gon,
 "Allas!" quod he, "O Chauntecleer, allas!
 I have to yow," quod he, "ydoon trespas, 4610
 In as muche as I maked yow aferd,
 Whan I yow hente and broght into this yerd.
 But, sire, I dide it of no wikke entente,
 Com down, and I shal telle yow what I mente;
 I shal seye sooth to yow, God help me so." 4615
 "Nay, thanne," quod he, "I shrewē us bothe two,
 And first I shrewe myself bothe blood and bones,
 If thou bigyle me ofter than ones.
 Thou shalt namoore, thurgh thy flaterye,
 Do me to synge and wynke with myn eye; . 4620
 For he that wynketh whan he sholde see,
 Al wilfully, God lat him nevere thee."
 "Nay," quod the fox, "but God yeve hym meschaunce,
 That is so undiscreet of governaunce,
 That jangleth, whan he sholde holde his pees." 4625
 Lo, swich it is for to be recchelees,
 And necligent, and truste on flaterye!
 But ye that holden this tale a folye,
 As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,
 Taketh the moralite, goode men; 4630
 For seint Paul seith, that al that writen is,
 To oure doctrine it is ywrite, ywis.
 Taketh the fruyt, and lat the chaf be stille.
 Now goode God, if that it be thy wille,
 As seith my lord, so make us alle goode men, 4635
 And brynge us to his heighe blisse. Amen.

4618 any ofter.

Heere is ended the Nonnes Preestes tale.

NOTE.—The sixteen lines of Epilogue to this Tale are here omitted. The tone, and in part, the very words, are a repetition of the Prologue to the Monkes Tale. This cannot have been Chaucer's intention, and the Epilogue may therefore be either spurious, or a trial link, rejected after the Monkes Prologue was written.

GROUP C.

THE PHISICIENS TALE

Heere folweth the Phisiciens tale.

Ther was, as telleth Titus Livius,
A knyght that called was Virginus,
Fulfilde of honour and of worthynesse,
And strong of freendes, and of greet richesse.
This knyght a doghter hadde by his wyf, 5
No children hadde he mo in al his lyf.
Fair was this mayde in excellent beautee
Aboven every wight that man may see.
For Nature hath with sovereyn diligence
Yformed hir in so greet excellence, 10
As though she wolde seyn, "Lo, I, Nature,
Thus kan I forme and peynte a creature
Whan that me list; who kan me countrefete?
Pigmalion noght, though he ay forge and bete,
Or grave, or peynte, for I dar wel seyn 15
Apelles, Zanzis sholde werche in veyn
Outher to grave or peynte, or forge, or bete,
If they presumed me to countrefete.
For He that is the former principal
Hath maked me his vicaire general 20
To forme and peynten erthely creaturis
Right as me list, and ech thyng in my cure is
Under the Moone, that may wane and waxe,
And for my werk right nothyng wol I axe.
My lord and I been ful of oon accord; 25
I made hir to the worship of my lord,
So do I alle myne othere creatures,
What colour that they han, or what figures."

Thus semeth me that Nature wolde seye.

This mayde of age twelf yeer was and tweye, 30
 In which that Nature hadde swich delit.
 For right as she kan peynte a lilie whit,
 And reed a rose, right with swich peynture
 She peynted hath this noble creature,
 Er she were born, upon hir lymes fre, 35
 Where as by right swiche colours sholde be.
 And Phebus dyed hath hir treses grete,
 Lyk to the stremes of his burned heete;
 And if that excellent was hir beautee,
 A thousand foold moore vertuuous was she. 40
 In hire ne lakked no condicioun
 That is to preyse, as by discrecioun;
 As wel in goost as body chast was she,
 For which she floured in virginitee
 With alle humylitee and abstinence, 45
 With alle attemperaunce and pacience,
 With mesure eek of beryng and array.
 Discreet she was in answeryng alway,
 Though she were wise Pallas, dar I seyn,
 Hir facound eek ful wommanly and pleyn, 50
 No countrefeted termes hadde she
 To seme wys, but after hir degree
 She spak, and alle hir wordes, moore and lesse,
 Sownynge in vertu and in gentillesse.
 Shamefast she was in maydens shamefastnesse, 55
 Constant in herte, and evere in bisynesse
 To dryve hir out of ydel slogardye.
 Bacus hadde of hire mouth right no maistrie;
 For wyn and youthe dooth Venus encresse,
 As man in fyr wol casten oille or gresse. 60
 And of hir owene vertu unconstreyned,
 She hath ful ofte tyme syk hir feyned,
 For that she wolde fleen the compaignye

Wher likly was to treten of folye,
 As is at feestes, revels, and at daunces 65
 That been occasions of daliaunces.
 Swich thynges maken children for to be
 To soone rype and boold, as men may se,
 Which is ful perilous, and hath been yooore;
 For al to soone may they lerne loore 70
 Of booldnesse, whan she woxen is a wyf.

And ye maistresses, in youre olde lyf,
 That lordes doghtres han in governaunce,
 Ne taketh of my wordes no displesaunce;
 Thenketh that ye been set in governynges 75
 Of lordes doghtres, oonly for two thynges;
 Outher for ye han kept youre honestee,
 Or elles ye han falle in freletee,
 And knowen wel ynough the olde daunce,
 And han forsaken fully swich meschaunce 80
 For everemo; therfore for Cristes sake,
 To teche hem vertu looke that ye ne slake.
 A thief of venysoun, that hath forlaft
 His likerousnesse, and al his olde craft,
 Kan kepe a forest best of any man. 85
 Now kepeth wel, for if ye wole, ye kan.
 Looke wel that ye unto no vice assente,
 Lest ye be dampned for your wikke entente.
 For who so dooth, a traitour is, certeyn;
 And taketh kepe of that that I shal seyn, 90
 Of alle tresons, sovereyn pestilence
 Is whan a wight bitrayseth innocence.
 Ye fadres and ye moodres, eek also,
 Though ye han children, be it oon or two,
 Yourre is the charge of al hir surveiaunce 95
 Whil that they been under youre governaunce.
 Beth war, if by ensample of youre lyvyng,
 Or by youre negligence in chastisyng,

That they perisse, for I dar wel seye,
 If that they doon ye shul it deere abeye; 100
 Under a shepherde softe and necligent
 The wolf hath many a sheep and lamb to-rent.
 Suffyseth oon ensample now as here,
 For I moot turne agayn to my mateere.

This mayde, of which I wol this tale expresse, 105
 So kepte himself, hir neded no maistresse.
 For in hir lyvyng maydens myghten rede,
 As in a book, every good word or dede
 That longeth to a mayden vertuous,
 She was so prudent and so bountevous. 110
 For which the fame out-sprong on every syde
 Bothe of hir beautee and hir bountee wyde,
 That thurgh that land they preised hire echone
 That loved vertu; save envye allone,
 That sory is of oother mennes wele, 115
 And glad is of his sorwe and his unheelee—
 The doctour maketh this descripcioun.

This mayde upon a day wente in the toun
 Toward a temple, with hir mooder deere,
 As is of yonge maydens the manere. 120
 Now was ther thanne a justice in that toun,
 That governour was of that regioun,
 And so bifel this juge hise eyen caste
 Upon this mayde, avysynge hym ful faste
 As she cam forby, ther as this juge stood. 125
 Anon his herte chaunged and his mood,
 So was he caught with beautee of this mayde,
 And to hymself ful pryvely he sayde,
 "This mayde shal be myn, for any man."
 Anon the feend into his herte ran, 130
 And taughte hym sodeynly, that he by slyghte
 The mayden to his purpos wyne myghte.
 For certes, by no force, ne by no meede,
 Hym thoughte he was nat able for to speede;

For she was strong of freendes, and eek she 135
Confermed was in swich soverayn bountee,
That wel he wiste he myghte hir nevere wyne,
As for to maken hir with hir body synne.
For which, by greet deliberacioun,
He sente after a cherl, was in the toun, 140
Which that he knew for subtil and for boold.
This Juge unto this cherl his tale hath toold
In secree wise, and made hym to ensure
He sholde telle it to no creature,
And if he dide, he sholde lese his heed. 145
Whan that assented was this cursed reed,
Glad was this juge, and maked him greet cheere,
And yaf hym yiftes precieuse and deere.
Whan shapen was al hir conspiracie
Fro point to point, how that his lecherie 150
Parfourned sholde been ful subtilly,
(As ye shul heere it after openly)
Hoom gooth the cherl, that highte Claudius.
This false juge, that highte Apius,
So was his name—for this is no fable, 155
But knowen for historial thyng notable;
The sentence of it sooth is out of doute—
This false juge gooth now faste aboute
To hasten his delit al that he may.
And so bifel soone after on a day, 160
This false juge, as telleth us the storie,
As he was wont, sat in his consistorie,
And yaf his doomes upon sondry cas.
This false cherl cam forth a ful greet pas
And seyde, “Lord, if that it be youre wille, 165
As dooth me right upon this pitous bille
In which I pleyne upon Virginus;
And if that he wol seyn it is nat thus,
I wol it preeve, and fynde good witesse
That sooth is, that my bille wol expresse.” 170

The juge answerde, "Of this in his absence,
 I may nat yeve diffynytyve sentence.
 Lat do hym calle, and I wol gladly heere.
 Thou shalt have al right and no wrong heere."
 Virginius cam to wite the juges wille, 175
 And right anon was rad this cursed bille.
 The sentence of it was, as ye shul heere:
 "To yow, my lord, Sire Apius so deere,
 Sheweth youre povre servant Claudius,
 How that a knyght called Virginius 180
 Agayns the lawe, agayn al equitee,
 Holdeth expres agayn the wyl of me
 My servant, which that is my thral by right,
 Which fro myn hous was stole upon a nyght,
 Whil that she was ful yong; this wol I preeve 185
 By witnesse, lord, so that it nat yow greeve.
 She nys his doghter, nat what so he seye.
 Wherefore to yow, my lord the Juge, I preye
 Yeld me my thral, if that it be youre wille."
 Lo, this was al the sentence of his bille. 190
 Virginius gan upon the cherl biholde,
 But hastily, er he his tale tolde,
 And wolde have preeved it as sholde a knyght,
 And eek by witnessyng of many a wight,
 That it was fals, that seyde his adversarie, 195
 This cursed juge wolde no thyng tarie,
 Ne heere a word moore of Virginius,
 But yaf his juggement and seyde thus:
 "I deeme anon this cherl his servant have,
 Thou shalt no lenger in thyn hous hir save. 200
 Go, bryng hir forth, and put hir in our warde.
 The cherl shal have his thral, this I awarde."
 And whan this worthy knyght Virginius,
 Thurgh sentence of this justice Apius,
 Moste by force his deere doghter yeven 205

Unto the juge in lecherie to lyven,
 He gooth hym hoom, and sette him in his halle,
 And leet anon his deere doghter calle,
 And with a face deed as asshen colde,
 Upon hir humble face he gan biholde 210
 With fadres pitee stikyng thurgh his herte,
 Al wolde he from his purpos nat converte.

“Doghter,” quod he, “Virginia, by thy name,
 Ther been two weyes, outhur deeth or shame
 That thou most suffre, allas, that I was bore! 215
 For nevere thou deservedest wherfore
 To dyen with a swerd, or with a knyf.
 O deere doghter, ender of my lyf,
 Which I have fostred up with swich plesaunce,
 That thou were nevere out of my remembraunce. 220
 O doghter, which that art my laste wo,
 And in my lyf my laste joye also,
 O gemme of chastitee, in pacience
 Take thou thy deeth, for this is my sentence,
 For love and nat for hate, thou most be deed; 225
 My pitous hand moot smyten of thyn heed.
 Allas, that evere Apius the say!
 Thus hath he falsly jugged the to day.”
 And tolde hir al the cas, as ye bifore
 Han herd, nat nedeth for to telle it moore. 230
 “O mercy, deere fader,” quod this mayde,
 And with that word she bothe hir armes layde
 About his nekke, as she was wont to do.
 The teeris bruste out of hir eyen two,
 And seyde, “Goode fader, shal I dye? 235
 Is ther no grace? is ther no remedye?”
 “No, certes, deere doghter myn,” quod he.
 “Thanne yif me leyser, fader myn,” quod she,
 “My deeth for to compleyne a litel space,
 For, pardee, Jepte yaf his doghter grace 240

For to compleyne, er he hir slow, allas!
 And God it woot, no thyng was hir trespas
 But for she ran hir fader for to see
 To welcome hym with greet solempnitee."
 And with that word she fil aswowne anon; 245
 And after whan hir swownyng is agon
 She riseth up and to hir fader sayde,
 "Blissed be God that I shal dye a mayde;
 Yif me my deeth, er that I have a shame.
 Dooth with youre child youre wyl, a Goddes name." 250
 And with that word she preyed hym ful ofte
 That with his swerd he wolde smyte softe,
 And with that word aswowne doun she fil.
 Hir fader with ful sorweful herte and wil
 Hir heed of smoot, and by the top it hente, 255
 And to the jugc he gan it to presente
 As he sat yet in doom, in consistorie.
 And whan the jugc it saugh, as seith the storie,
 He bad to take hym and anhangen hym faste.
 But right anon a thousand peple in thraste 260
 To save the kynght for routhe and for pitee;
 For knowen was the false iniquitee.
 The peple anon hath suspect of this thyng,
 By manere of the cherles chalangyng,
 That it was by the assent of Apius— 265
 They wisten wel that he was lecherus;
 For which unto this Apius they gon
 And caste hym in a prisoun right anon,
 Ther as he slow hymself, and Claudius
 That servant was unto this Apius, 270
 Was demed for to hange upon a tree,
 But that Virginus, of his pitee,
 So preyde for hym, that he was exiled;
 And elles, certes, he had been bigyled.
 The remenant were anhangen, moore and lesse, 275

That were consentant of this cursednesse.

Heere men may seen, how synne hath his merite.

Beth war, for no man woot whom God wol smyte

In no degree, ne in which manere wyse

The worm of conscience may agryse 280

Of wikked lyf, though it so pryvee be

That no man woot therof but God and he.

For be he lewed man, or ellis lered,

He noot how soone that he shal been afered.

Therefore I rede yow this conseil take, 285

Forsaketh synne, er synne yow forsake.

Heere endeth the Phisiciens tale.

EPILOGUE

The wordes of the Hooste to the Phisicien and the Pardoner.

Oure Hooste gan to swere as he were wood;
 "Harrow!" quod he, "by nayles and by blood!
 This was a fals cherl and a fals justice!
 As shameful deeth as herte may devyse 290
 Come to thise juges and hire advocatz!
 Algate this sely mayde is slayn, allas!
 Allas! to deere boughte she beautee!
 Wherefore I seye al day, as men may see
 That yiftes of Fortune and of Nature 295
 Been cause of deeth to many a creature.
 [Hir beautee was hir deeth, I dar wel sayn;
 Allas, so pitously as she was slayn!]
 Of bothe yiftes that I speke of now
 Men han ful ofte moore harm than prow. 300
 But trewely, myn owene maister deere,
 This is a pitous tale for to heere.
 But nathelees, passe over is no fors;
 I pray to God so save thy gentil cors,
 And eek thyne urnals and thy jurdanes, 305
 Thyn ypocras and eek thy Galianes
 And every boyste ful of thy letuarie,
 God blesse hem, and oure lady Seinte Marie!
 So moot I theen, thou art a propre man,
 And lyk a prelat, by Seint Ronyan. 310
 Seyde I nat wel? I kan nat speke in terme;
 But wel I woot thou doost myn herte to erme,
 That I almoost have caught a cardyacle.
 By corpus bones, but I have triacle,
 Or elles a draughte of moyste and corny ale, 315

Or but I heere anon a myrie tale,
Myn herte is lost, for pitee of this mayde!
Thou beelamy, thou Pardoner," he sayde,
"Telle us som myrthe or japes right anon."
"It shal be doon," quod he, "by Seint Ronyon; 320
But first," quod he, "heere at this ale-stake,
I wol bothe drynke and eten of a cake."
And right anon the gentils gonne to crye,
"Nay, lat hym telle us of no ribaudye!
Telle us som moral thyng that we may leere 325
Som wit, and thanne wol we gladly heere!"
"I graunte, ywis," quod he, "but I moot thynke
Upon som honeste thyng, while that I drynke."

THE PARDONERS PROLOGUE

Heere folweth the Prologe of the Pardoners tale.

Radix malorum est Cupiditas Ad Thimotheum 6°.

Lordynges—quod he—in chirches whan I preche,
I peyne me to han an hauteyn speche, 330
And rynges it out as round as gooth a belle,
For I kan al by rote that I telle.

My theme is alwey oon and evere was,
“Radix malorum est Cupiditas.”

First I pronounce whennes that I come, 335
And thanne my bulles shewe I, alle and some;
Oure lige lordes seel on my patente;
That shewe I first, my body to warente,
That no man be so boold, ne preest ne clerk,
Me to destourbe of Cristes hooly werk. 340

And after that thanne telle I forth my tales,
Bulles of popes and of cardynales,
Of patriarkes and bishopes I shewe,
And in Latyn I speke a wordes fewe,
To saffron-with my predicacioun, 345
And for to stire hem to devocioun.

Thanne shewe I forth my longe cristal stones,
Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones;
Relikes been they, as wenen they echoon.
Thanne have I in latoun a sholder-boon 350
Which that was of an hooly Jewes sheepe.

“Goode men,” I seye, “taak of my wordes keepe:
If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,
If cow, or calf, or sheep, or oxwelle,
That any worm hath ete, or worm ystonge, 355
Taak water of that welle, and wassh his tonge,

And it is hool anon; and forthermoor,
 Of pokkes and of scabbe and every soor
 Shal every sheepe be hool that of this welle
 Drynketh a draughte; taak kepe eek what I telle, 360
 If that the goode man that the beestes oweth,
 Wol every wyke, er that the cok hym croweth,
 Fastynge, drinken of this welle a draughte,
 As thilke hooly Jew oure eldres taughte,
 Hise beestes and his stoor shal multiplie. 365
 And, sire, also it heeleth jalousie;
 For though a man be falle in jalous rage,
 Lat maken with this water his potage,
 And nevere shal he moore his wyf mystriste,
 Though he the soothe of hir defaute wiste, 370
 Al had she taken preestes two or thre.
 Heere is a miteyn, eek, that ye may se:
 He that his hand wol putte in this mitayn,
 He shal have multipliynge of his grayn
 What he hath sowed, be it whete or otes, 375
 So that he offre pens, or elles grotes.
 Goode men and wommen, o thyng warne I yow,
 If any wight be in this chirche now,
 That hath doon synne horrible, that he
 Dar nat for shame of it yshryven be, 380
 Or any womman, be she yong or old,
 That hath ymaad hir housbonde cokewold,
 Swich folk shal have no power ne no grace
 To offren to my relikes in this place.
 And who so fyndeth hym out of swich fame, 385
 He wol come up and offre, on Goddes name,
 And I assoille him, by the auctoritee
 Which that by bulle ygraunted was to me."

By this gaude have I wonne, yeer by yeer,
 An hundred mark, sith I was pardoner. 390
 I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet,

And whan the lewed peple is doun yset,
 I preche so, as ye han herd bifoore,
 And telle an hundred false japes moore.
 Thanne payne I me to strecche forth the nekke, 395
 And est and west upon the peple I bekke,
 As dooth a dowve sittynge on a berne.
 Myne handes and my tonge goon so yerne
 That it is joye to se my bisynesse.
 Of avarice and of swich cursednesse 400
 Is al my prechyng, for to make hem free
 To yeven hir pens; and namely, unto me!
 For myn entente is nat but for to wynne,
 And no thyng for correccioun of synne.
 I rekke nevere, whan that they been beryed, 405
 Though that hir soules goon a blakeberied,
 For certes, many a predicacioun
 Comth ofte tyme of yvel entencioun.
 Som for plesance of folk, and flaterye,
 To been avaunced by ypocrisye, 410
 And som for veyne glorie, and som for hate.
 For whan I dar noon oother weyes debate,
 Thanne wol I styngge hym with my tonge smerte
 In prechyng, so that he shal nat asterte
 To been defamed falsly, if that he 415
 Hath trespassed to my bretheren, or to me.
 For though I telle noght his propre name,
 Men shal wel knowe that it is the same
 By signes, and by othere circumstances.
 Thus quyte I folk that doon us displesances, 420
 Thus spitte I out my venym, under hewe
 Of hoolynesse, to semen hooly and trewe.
 But shortly, myn entente I wol devyse;
 I preche of no thyng but for coveityse.
 Therefore my theme is yet, and evere was, 425
 "Radix malorum est Cupiditas."

Thus kan I preche agayn that same vice
Which that I use, and that is avarice.
But though myself be guilty in that synne,
Yet kan I maken oother folk to twynne 430
From avarice, and soore to repente;
But that is nat my principal entente.
I preche no thyng but for coveitise;
Of this mateere it oghte ynogh suffise.
Thanne telle I hem ensamples many oon 435
Of olde stories longe tyme agoon,
For lewed peple loven tales olde;
Swiche thynges kan they wel reporte and holde.
What? trowe ye, the whiles I may preche,
And wynne gold and silver for I teche, 440
That I wol lyve in poverte wilfully?
Nay, nay, I thoghte it nevere, trewely.
For I wol preche and begge in sondry landes,
I wol nat do no labour with myne handes,
Ne make baskettes, and lyve therby, 445
By cause I wol nat beggen ydelly.
I wol noon of the apostles countrefete,
I wol have moneie, wolle, chese, and whete,
Al were it yeven of the povereste page,
Or of the povereste wydwe in a village, 450
Al sholde hir children sterve for famyne.
Nay, I wol drynke licour of the vyne,
And have a joly wenche in every toun.
But herkneth, lordynges, in conclusioun:
Your likyng is, that I shal telle a tale. 455
Now have I dronke a draughte of corny ale,
By God, I hope I shal yow telle a thyng
That shal by resoun been at youre likyng.
For though myself be a ful vicious man,
A moral tale yet I yow telle kan, 460
Which I am wont to preche, for to wynne.
Now hoold youre pees, my tale I wol bigynne.

THE PARDONERS TALE

Heere bigynneth the Pardoners tale.

In Flaundres whilom was a compaignye
Of yonge folk, that haunteden folye,
As riot, hasard, stywes, and tavernes, 465
Wher as with harpes, lutes, and gyternes
They daunce and pleyen at dees, bothe day and nyght,
And eten also and drynken over hir myght,
Thurgh which they doon the devel sacrificise
Withinne that develes temple in cursed wise, 470
By superfluytee abhomynable.
Hir othes been so grete and so dampnable
That it is grisly for to heere hem swere.
Oure blissed lordes body they to-tere,
Hem thoughte that Jewes rente hym noght ynough, 475
And ech of hem at otheres synne lough.
And right anon thanne comen tombesteres,
Fetys and smale, and yonge frutesteres,
Syngeres with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
Whiche been the verray develes officeres 480
To kyndle and blowe the fyr of lecherye,
That is annexed unto glotonye.
The hooly writ take I to my witnesse,
That luxurie is in wyn and dronkenesse.
Lo, how that dronken Looth unkyndely 485
Lay by hise doghtres two unwityngly;
So dronke he was, he nyste what he wroghte.
Herodes, whoso wel the stories soghte,
Whan he of wyn was repleet at his feeste,
Right at his owene table he yaf his heeste 490
To sleen the Baptist John, ful giltelees.

Senec^e seith a good word, doutelees;
He seith, he kan no difference fynde
Bitwix a man that is out of his mynde,
And a man which that is dronkelewe, 495
But that woodnesse fallen in a shrewe
Persevereth lenger than dooth dronkenesse.
O glotonye, ful of cursednesse!
O cause first of oure confusioun!
O original of oure dampnacioun 500
Til Crist hadde boght us with his blood agayn!
Lo, how deere, shortly for to sayn,
Aboght was thilke cursed vileynye!
Corrupt was al this world for glotonye!
Adam oure fader, and his wyf also, 505
Fro Paradys to labour and to wo
Were dryven for that vice, it is no drede;
For whil that Adam fasted, as I rede,
He was in Paradys, and whan that he
Eet of the fruyt deffended on the tree, 510
Anon he was out-cast to wo and peyne.
O glotonye, on thee wel oghte us pleyne!
O, wiste a man how manye maladyes
Folwen of excesse and of glotonyes,
He wolde been the moore mesurable 515
Of his diete, sittynge at his table.
Allas, the shorte throte, the tendre mouth
Maketh that est and west and north and south
In erthe, in eir, in water, man to swynke
To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and drynke. 520
Of this matiere, O Paul! wel kanstow trete,
Mete unto wombe and wombe cek unto mete
Shal God destroyen bothe, as Paulus seith.
Allas, a foul thyng is it, by my feith!
To seye this word, and fouler is the dede 525
Whan man so drynketh of the white and rede,
That of his throte he maketh his pryvee

Thurgh thilke cursed superfluitee.

The Apostel wepyng seith ful pitously,

“Ther walken manye of whiche yow toold have I, 530

I seye it now wepyng with pitous voys,

That they been enemys of Cristes croys,

Of whiche the ende is deeth, wombe is hir god.”

O wombe! O bely! O stynkyng cod!

Fulfilled of donge and of corrupcioun, 535

At either ende of thee foul is the soun;

How greet labour and cost is thee to fynde,

Thise cookes, how they stampe, and streyne, and grynde,

And turnen substaunce into accident,

To fulfillen al thy likerous talent! 540

Out of the harde bones knokke they

The mary, for they caste noght away,

That may go thurgh the golet softe and swoote;

Of spicerie, of leef, and bark, and roote,

Shal been his sauce ymaked by delit, 545

To make hym yet a newer appetit.

But certes, he that haunteth swiche delices

Is deed, whil that he lyveth in tho vices.

A lecherous thyng is wyn, and dronkenesse

Is ful of stryvyng and of wrecchednesse. 550

O dronke man, disfigured is thy face!

Sour is thy breath, foul artow to embrace,

And thurgh thy dronke nose semeth the soun,

As though thou seydest ay, “Sampsoun! Sampsoun!”

And yet, God woot, Sampsoun drank nevere no wyn! 555

Thou fallest, as it were a styked swyn;

Thy tonge is lost, and al thyn honeste cure

For dronkenesse is verray sepulture

Of mannes wit and his discrecioun,

In whom that drynke hath dominacioun. 560

He kan no conseil kepe, it is no drede;

Now kepe yow fro the white and fro the rede,

And namely, fro the white wyn of Lepe,
 That is to selle in Fysshstrete, or in Chepe.
 This wyn of Spaigne crepeth subtilly 565
 In othere wynes, growynge faste by,
 Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee,
 That whan a man hath dronken draughtes thre
 And weneth that he be at hoom in Chepe,
 He is in Spaigne, right at the toun of Lepe, 570
 Nat at the Rochele, ne at Burdeux toun;
 And thanne wol he seye "Sampsoun, Sampsoun!"
 But herkneth, lordes, o word I yow preye,
 That alle the sovereyn actes, dar I seye,
 Of victories in the Olde Testament, 575
 Thurgh verray God that is omnipotent
 Were doon in abstinence and in preyere.
 Looketh the Bible, and ther ye may it leere.
 Looke, Attila, the grete conquerour,
 Deyde in his sleepe, with shame and dishonour, 580
 Bledynge ay at his nose in dronkenesse.
 A capitayn sholde lyve in sobrenesse;
 And over al this avyseth yow right wel,
 What was comaunded unto Lamwel,
 Nat Samuel, but Lamwel, seye I; 585
 Redeth the Bible and fynde it expresly,
 Of wyn yevyng to hem that han justise.
 Namooore of this, for it may wel suffise.
 And now that I have spoken of glotonye,
 Now wol I yow deffenden hasardrye. 590
 Hasard is verray mooder of lesynges,
 And of deceite and cursed forswerynges,
 Blasphemyng of Crist, manslaughtre and wast also,
 Of catel and of tyme, and forthermo
 It is repréeve and contrarie of honour 595
 For to ben holde a commune hasardour.
 And ever the hyer he is of estaat,

The moore is he holden desolaat;
 If that a prynce useth hasardrye,
 In alle governaunce and policye 600
 He is as by commune opinioun
 Yholde the lasse in reputacioun.
 Stilboun, that was a wys embassadour,
 Was sent to Corynthe in ful greet honour,
 Fro Lacidomye to maken hire alliaunce. 605
 And whan he cam hym happede par chaunce,
 That alle the gretteste that were of that lond
 Pleyynge atte hasard he hem fond.
 For which, as soone as it myghte be,
 He stal hym hoom agayn to his contree, 610
 And seyde, "Ther wol I nat lese my name,
 Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame.
 Yow for to allie unto none hasardours.
 Sendeth othere wise embassadours,
 For by my trouthe me were levere dye 615
 Than I yow sholde to hasardours allye.
 For ye that been so glorious in honours
 Shul nat allyen yow with hasardours,
 As by my wyl, ne as by my trettee,"
 This wise philosophre, thus seyde hee. 620
 Looke eek, that to the kyng Demetrius
 The kyng of Parthes, as the book seith us,
 Sente him a paire of dees of gold, in scorn,
 For he hadde used hasard therbiforn,
 For which he beeld his glorie or his renoun 625
 At no value or reputacioun.
 Lordes may fynden oother maner pley
 Honeste ynough, to dryve the day away.
 Now wol I speke of othes false and grete
 A word or two, as olde bookes trette. 630
 Gret sweryng is a thyng abhominable,
 And fals sweryng is yet moore reprevable.

The heighe God forbad sweryng at al,
 Witnesse on Mathew; but in special
 Of sweryng seith the hooly Jeremye, 635
 "Thou shalt seye sooth thyne othes, and nat lye,
 And swere in doom, and eek in rightwisnesse,"
 But ydel sweryng is a cursednesse.
 Bihoold and se, that in the firste table
 Of heighe Goddes heestes honorable 640
 How that the seconde heeste of hym is this:
 Take nat my name in ydel or amys.
 Lo, rather he forbedeth swich sweryng
 Than homycide, or any cursed thyng!
 I seye, that as by ordre thus it stondeth, 645
 This knowen that hise heestes understondeth
 How that the seconde heeste of God is that.
 And forther-over I wol thee telle al plat,
 That vengeance shal nat parten from his hous
 That of hise othes is to outrageous— 650
 "By Goddes precious herte and by his nayles,
 And by the blood of Crist that is in Hayles,
 Sevene is my chaunce and thyn is cynk and treye.
 By Goddes armes, if thou falsly pleye,
 This dagger shal thurghout thyn herte go!" 655
 This fruyt cometh of the bicched bones two,
 Forsweryng, ire, falsnesse, homycide!
 Now for the love of Crist, that for us dyde,
 Lete youre othes bothe grete and smale.
 But, sires, now wol I telle forth my tale. 660
 Thise riotoures thre, of whiche I telle,
 Longe erst er prime rong of any belle,
 Were set hem in a taverne for to drynke.
 And as they sat, they herde a belle clynke
 Biforn a cors, was caried to his grave. 665
 That oon of hem gan callen to his knave,
 "Go bet," quod he, "and axe redily

What cors is this, that passeth heer forby,
 And looke, that thou reporte his name weel."
 "Sir," quod this boy, "it nedeth neveradeel; 670
 It was me toold, er ye cam heer two houres.
 He was, pardee, an old felawe of youre,
 And sodeynly he was yslayn to-nyght,
 Fordronke, as he sat on his bench upright.
 Ther cam a privee thief men clepeth Deeth, 675
 That in this contree al the peple sleeth,
 And with his spere he smoot his herte atwo,
 And wente his wey withouten wordes mo.
 He hath a thousand slayn this pestilence,
 And maister, er ye come in his presence, 680
 Me thynketh that it were necessarie
 For to be war of swich an adversarie.
 Beth redy for to meete hym everemoore,
 Thus taughte me my dame, I sey namoore."
 "By Seinte Marie," seyde this taverner, 685
 "The child seith sooth, for he hath slayn this yeer
 Henne over a mile, withinne a greet village
 Bothe man and womman, child, and hyne, and page.
 I trowe his habitacioun be there.
 To been avysed, greet wysdom it were, 690
 Er that he dide a man a dishonour."
 "Ye, Goddes armes," quod this riotour,
 "Is it swich peril with hym for to meete?
 I shal hym seke, by wey and eek by strete,
 I make avow to Goddes digne bones. 695
 Herkneth, felawes, we thre been al ones;
 Lat ech of us holde up his hand til oother,
 And ech of us bicomen otheres brother,
 And we wol sleen this false traytour Deeth.
 He shal be slayn, which that so manye sleeth, 700
 By Goddes dignitee, er it be nyght."
 Togidres han thise thre hir trouthes plight,
 To lyve and dyen, ech of hem for oother,

As though he were his owene ybore brother;
 And up they stirte al dronken in this rage, 705
 And forth they goon towards that village,
 Of which the taverner hadde spoke biforn.
 And many a grisly ooth thanne han they sworn,
 And Cristes blessed body they to-rente,
 'Deeth shal be deed, if that they may hym hente.' 710

Whan they han goon nat fully half a mile,
 Right as they wolde han troden over a stile,
 An oold man and a povre with hem mette.
 This olde man ful mekely hem grette,
 And seyde thus, "Now, lordes, God yow see." 715
 The proudeste of thise riotoures three
 Answerde agayn, "What, carl, with sory grace,
 Why artow al forwrapped save thy face?
 Why lyvestow so longe in so greet age?"
 This olde man gan looke in his visage, 720
 And seyde thus, "For I ne kan nat fynde
 A man, though that I walked in to Ynde,
 Neither in citee nor in no village,
 That wolde chaunge his youthe for myn age.
 And therfore moot I han myn age stille 725
 As longe tyme as it is Goddes wille.
 Ne deeth, allas, ne wol nat han my lyf!
 Thus walke I lyk a resteles kaityf,
 And on the ground, which is my moodres gate,
 I knokke with my staf bothe erly and late, 730
 And seye, 'leeve mooder, leet me in!
 Lo, how I vanysshe, flessch and blood and skyn!
 Allas, whan shul my bones been at reste?
 Mooder, with yow wolde I chaunge my cheste,
 That in my chambre longe tyme hath be, 735
 Ye, for an heyre-clowt to wrappe me.'
 But yet to me she wol nat do that grace;
 For which ful pale and welked is my face.

But, sires, to yow it is no curteisye
 To speken to an old man vileynye, 740
 But he trespasse in word, or elles in dede.
 In hooly writ ye may yourself wel rede,
 'Agayns an oold man, hoor upon his heed,
 Ye sholde arise;' wherfore I yeve yow reed,
 Ne dooth unto an oold man noon harm now, 745
 Namooore than that ye wolde men did to yow
 In age, if that ye so longe abyde,
 And God be with yow where ye go or ryde.
 I moote go thider, as I have to go."
 "Nay, olde cherl, by God, thou shalt nat so," 750
 Seyde this oother hasardour anon.
 "Thou partest nat so lightly, by Seint John.
 Thou spak right now of thilke traytour Deeth,
 That in this contree alle oure freendes sleeth.
 Have heer my trouthe, as thou art his espye, 755
 Telle where he is, or thou shalt it abyde,
 By God and by the hooly sacrament,
 For soothly thou art oon of his assent
 To sleen us yonge folk, thou false thief!"
 "Now, sires," quod he, "if that ye be so leef 760
 To fynde Deeth, turne up this croked wey,
 For in that grove I lafte hym, by my fey,
 Under a tree, and there he wole abyde.
 Noght for your boost he wole him nothyng hyde,
 Se ye that ook? right ther ye shal hym fynde, 765
 God save yow that boghte agayn mankynde,
 And yow amende." Thus seyde this olde man;
 And everich of these riotoures ran
 Til he cam to that tree, and ther they founde
 Of floryns fyne of gold ycoyned rounde 770
 Wel ny an eighte busshels, as hem thoughte.
 No lenger thanne after Deeth they soughte,
 But ech of hem so glad was of that sighte,

For that the floryns been so faire and brighte,
 That doun they sette hem by this precious hoord. 775
 The worste of hem, he spak the firste word,
 "Bretheren," quod he, "taak kepe what I seye;
 My wit is greet, though that I bourde and pleye.
 This tresor hath Fortune unto us yeven,
 In myrthe and joliftee,oure lyf to lyven. 780
 And lightly as it comth, so wol we spende.
 Ey, Goddes precious dignitee, who wende
 Today that we sholde han so fair a grace?
 But myghte this gold be caried fro this place
 Hoom to myn hous or elles unto youre, 785
 (For wel ye woot that al this gold is oures)
 Thanne were we in heigh felicitee.
 But trewely, by daye it may nat bee;
 Men wolde seyn that we were theves stronge,
 And for oure owene tresor doon us honge. 790
 This tresor moste ycaried be by nyghte,
 As wisely and as slyly as it myghte.
 Wherfore I rede that cut among us alle
 Be drawe, and lat se wher the cut wol falle,
 And he that hath the cut, with herte blithe 795
 Shal renne to the towne, and that ful swithe,
 And brynge us breed and wyn, ful prively;
 And two of us shul kepen subtilly
 This tresor wel, and if he wol nat tarie,
 Whan it is nyght, we wol this tresor carie, 800
 By oon assent, where as us thynketh best."
 That oon of hem the cut broghte in his fest,
 And bad hym drawe, and looke where it wol falle;
 And it fil on the yongeste of hem alle,
 And forth toward the toun he wente anon. 805
 And al so soone, as that he was agon,
 That oon of hem spak thus unto that oother,
 "Thow knowest wel thou art my sworn brother,

Thy profit wol I telle thee anon.

Thou woost wel, that oure felawe is agon, 810

And heere is gold, and that ful greet plentee,

That shal departed been among us thre.

But nathelees, if I kan shape it so

That it departed were among us two,

Hadde I nat doon a freendes torn to thee?" 815

That oother answerde, "I noot hou that may be;

He woot how that the gold is with us tweye;

What shal we doon? what shal we to hym seye?"

"Shal it be conseil?" seyde the firste shrewe,

"And I shal tellen, in a wordes fewe, 820

What we shal doon, and bryngen it wel aboute."

"I graunte," quod that oother, "out of doute,

That by my trouthe I shal thee nat biwreye."

"Now," quod the firste, "thou woost wel we be tweye,

And two of us shul strenger be than oon; 825

Looke whan that he is set, that right anoon

Arys, as though thou woldest with hym pleye,

And I shal ryve hym thurgh the sydes tweye,

Whil that thou strogelest with hym as in game.

And with thy daggere looke thou do the same, 830

And thanne shal al this gold departed be,

My deere freend, bitwixen me and thee.

Thanne may we bothe oure lustes all fulfille,

And pleye at dees right at oure owene wille."

And thus acorded been thise shrewes tweye 835

To sleen the thridde, as ye han herd me seye.

This yongeste, which that wente unto the toun,

Ful ofte in herte he rolleth up and down

The beautee of thise floryns newe and brighte.

"O lord," quod he, "if so were that I myghte 840

Have al this tresor to my-self allone,

Ther is no man that lyveth under the trone

Of God, that sholde lyve so murye as I."

And atte laste the feend, oure enemy,

Putte in his thought that he sholde poyson beye, 845
With which he myghte sleen hise felawes tweye.
For why, the feend foond hym in swich lyvyng,
That he hadde leve hem to sorwe brynge;
For this was outrely his fulle entente,
To sleen hem bothe, and nevere to repente. 850
And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he tarie,
Into the toun unto a pothecarie
And preyde hym that he hym wolde selle
Som poyoun, that he myghte hise rattes quelle,
And eek ther was a polcat in his hawe, 855
That, as he seyde, hise capouns hadde yslawe;
And fayn he wolde wreke hym, if he myghte,
On vermyn that destroyed hym by nyghte.
The pothecarie answerde, "and thou shalt have
A thyng, that al so God my soule save, 860
In al this world ther is no creature
That eten or dronken hath of this confiture
Noght but the montance of a corn of whete,
That he ne shal his lif anon forlete;
Ye, sterve he shal, and that in lassè while 865
Than thou wolt goon a paas nat but a mile,
This poyoun is so strong and violent."
This cursed man hath in his hond yhent
This poyoun in a box, and sith he ran
Into the nexte strete unto a man 870
And borwed hym of large botels thre;
And in the two his poyson poured he,
The thridde he kepte clene for his owene drynke,
For al the nyght he shoop hym for to swynke
In carynge of the gold out of that place. 875
And whan this riotour, with sory grace,
Hadde filled with wyn his grete botels thre,
To hise felawes agayn repaireth he.

What nedeth it to sermone of it moore?

As ye were born—and lo, sires, thus I preche; 915
 And Jesu Crist, that is oure soules leche,
 So graunte yow his pardoun to receyve,
 For that is best, I wol yow nat deceyve.

But sires, o word forgat I in my tale,
 I have relikes and pardoun in my male 920
 As faire as any man in Engeland,
 Whiche were me yeven by the popes hond.

If any of yow wole of devocioun
 Offren and han myn absolucioun,
 Com forth anon, and kneleth heere adoun, 925
 And mekely receyveth my pardoun,

Or elles taketh pardoun as ye wende,
 Al newe and fressh at every miles ende,
 So that ye offren alwey newe and newe
 Nobles or pens, whiche that be goode and trewe. 930

It is an honour to everich that is heer,
 That ye mowe have a suffisant pardoneer
 Tassoille yow in contree as ye ryde,
 For aventures whiche that may bityde.

Paraventure ther may fallen oon or two 935
 Doun of his hors, and breke his nekke atwo.

Look, which a seuretee is it to yow alle
 That I am in youre felaweship yfalle,
 That may assoille yow, bothe moore and lasse,
 Whan that the soule shal fro the body passe. 940

I rede that oure Hoost heere shal bigynne,
 For he is moost envoluped in synne.

Com forth, sire Hoost, and offre first anon,
 And thou shalt kisse my relikes everychon,
 Ye, for a grote, unbokete anon thy purs.— 945

“Nay, nay,” quod he, “thanne have I Cristes curs!”
 “Lat be,” quod he, “it shal nat be, so theech,
 Thou woldest make me kisse thyn olde breech,
 And swere it were a relyk of a seint,
 Though it were with thy fundement depeint. 950

But by the croys which that saint Eleyne fond,
I wolde I hadde thy coillons in myn hond
In stide of relikes or of seintuarie.
Lat kutte hem of, I wol thee helpe hem carie,
They shul be shryned in an hogges toord." 955
This Pardoner answerde nat a word;
So wrooth he was, no word ne wolde he seye.
"Now," quodoure Hoost, "I wol no lenger pleye
With thee, ne with noon oother angry man."
But right anon the worthy knyght bigan, 960
Whan that he saugh that al the peple lough,
"Namoore of this, for it is right ynough.
Sir Pardoner, be glad and myrie of cheere;
And ye, sir Hoost, that been to me so deere,
I prey yow, that ye kisse the pardoner; 965
And Pardoner, I prey thee, drawe thee neer,
And, as we diden, lat us laughe and pleye."
Anon they kiste, and ryden forth hir weye.

954 *thee helpe* with thee.

Heere is ended the Pardoners tale.

GROUP D.

PROLOGUE OF THE WYVES TALE OF BATH

The Prologe of the Wyves tale of Bathe.

Experience, though noon auctoritee
Were in this world, were right ynogh to me
To speke of wo that is in mariage;
For, lordynges, sith I twelf yeer was of age,
Thonked be God, that is eterne on lyve, 5
Housbondes at chirche-dore I have had fyve—
For I so ofte have ywedded bee—
And alle were worthy men in hir degree.
But me was toold, certeyn, nat longe agoon is,
That sith that Crist ne wente nevere but onis 10
To weddyng in the Cane of Galilee,
That by the same ensample, taughte he me,
That I ne sholde wedded be but ones.
Herkne eek, lo, which a sharpe word for the nones,
Beside a welle Jesus, God and Man, 15
Spak in repreeve of the Samaritan.
“Thou hast yhad fyve housbondes,” quod he,
“And thilke man the which that hath now thee
Is noght thyn housbonde;” thus seyde he, certeyn.
What that he mente ther by, I kan nat seyn; 20
But that I axe, why that the fifthe man
Was noon housbonde to the Samaritan?
How manye myghte she have in mariage?
Yet herde I nevere tellen in myn age
Upon this nombre diffinicioun. 25
Men may devyne, and glosen up and down,

.5 Ythonked. 12 *That om.*; taughte he thoughte. 14 *lo om.* 18 *that.*

But wel I woot expres withoute lye,
 God bad us for to wexe and multiplie;
 That gentil text kan I wel understonde.
 Eek wel I woot, he seyde, myn housbonde 30
 Sholde lete fader and mooder, and take me;
 But of no nombre menciouun made he,
 Of bigamye, or of octogamye;
 Why sholde men speke of it vileynye?
 Lo, heere the wise kyng, daun Salomon; 35
 I trowe he hadde wyves mo than oon—
 As, wolde God, it leueful were to me
 To be refresshed half so ofte as he—
 Which yifte of God hadde he, for alle hise wyvys?
 No man hath swich that in this world alyve is. 40
 God woot, this noble kyng, as to my wit,
 The firste nyght had many a myrie fit
 With ech of hem, so wel was hym on lyve!
 Blessed be God, that I have wedded fyve;
 Welcome the sixte, whan that evere he shal. 45
 For sothe I wol nat kepe me chaast in al;
 Whan myn housbonde is fro the world ygon
 Som cristen man shal wedde me anon.
 For thanne thapostle seith that I am free,
 To wedde a Goddes half where it liketh me. 50
 He seith, that to be wedded is no synne,
 Bet is to be wedded than to brynne.
 What rekketh me, thogh folk seye vileynye
 Of shrewed Lameth and of bigamye?
 I woot wel Abraham was an hooly man, 55
 And Jacob eek, as ferforth as I kan,
 And ech of hem hadde wyves mo than two,
 And many another holy man also.
 Whanne saugh ye evere in any manere age
 That hye God defended mariage 60

29 *wel om.* 37 were leueful unto. 44 Yblessed. 49 *that om.* 51 *that om.*
 58 *holy om.* 59 *any om.*

By expres word? I pray you, telleth me,
 Or where comanded he virginitee?
 I woot as wel as ye it is no drede,
 Thapostel, whan he speketh of maydenhede;
 He seyde, that precept therof hadde he noon. 65
 Men may conseil a womman to been oon,
 But conseillyng is no comandement;
 He putte it in oure owene juggement.
 For hadde God comanded maydenhede,
 Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng with the dede; 70
 And certein, if ther were no seed ysowe,
 Virginitee, wherof thanne sholde it growe?
 Poul dorste nat comanden, atte leeste,
 A thyng of which his maister yaf noon heeste.
 The dart is set up of virginitee; 75
 Cacche who so may, who renneth best lat see.
 But this word is nat taken of every wight,
 But ther as God lust gyve it of his myght.
 I woot wel, the apostel was a mayde;
 But natheles, thogh that he wroot and sayde 80
 He wolde that every wight were swich as he,
 Al nys but conseil to virginitee;
 And for to been a wyf, he yaf me leve
 Of indulgence, so it is no reprove
 To wedde me, if that my make dye, 85
 Withouten excepcioun of bigamye.
 "Al were it good no womman for to touche,"
 He mente, as in his bed or in his couche;
 For peril is bothe fyr and tow tassemble;
 Ye knowe what this ensample may resemble. 90
 This is al and som, he heeld virginitee
 Moore parfit than weddyng in freletee.
 Freletee clepe I, but if that he and she
 Wolde leden al hir lyf in chastitee.

64 Whan thapostel. 67 No nat. 73 Poul ne. 85 that om. 91 he heeld that
 92 parfit profiteth. 94 lede.

I graunte it wel, I have noon envie, 95
 Thogh maydenhede preferre bigamye;
 Hem liketh to be clene, body and goost.
 Of myn estaat I nyl nat make no boost,
 For wel ye knowe, a lord in his houshold,
 He nath nat every vessel al of gold; 100
 Somme been of tree, and doon hir lord servyse.
 God clepeth folk to hym in sondry wyse,
 And everich hath of God a propre yifte,
 Som this, som that, as hym liketh shifte.
 Virginitee is greet perfeccioun, 105
 And continence eek with devocioun.
 But Crist, that of perfeccioun is welle,
 Bad nat every wight he sholde go selle
 Al that he hadde, and gyve it to the poore,
 And in swich wise folwe hym and his foore. 110
 He spak to hem that wolde lyve parfitly,
 And lordynges, by youre leve, that am nat I.
 I wol bistowe the flour of myn age
 In the actes and in fruyt of mariage.
 An housbonde I wol have, I nyl nat lette,
 Which shal be bothe my dettour and my thral, 155
 And have his tribulacioun withal
 Upon his flessh whil that I am his wyf.
 I have the power durynge al my lyf
 Upon his propre body, and noght he.
 Right thus the Apostel tolde it unto me, 160
 And bad oure housbondes for to love us weel.
 Al this sentence me liketh every deel,—
 Up stirte the Pardoner, and that anon,
 “Now, dame,” quod he, “by God and by Seint John,
 Ye been a noble prechour in this cas. 165
 I was aboute to wedde a wyf, allas!
 What sholde I bye it on my flessh so deere?
 Yet hadde I levere wedde no wyf to-yeere!”

"Abyde," quod she, "my tale is nat bigonne.
 Nay, thou shalt drynken of another tonne, 170
 Er that I go, shal savoure wors than ale.
 And whan that I have toold thee forth my tale
 Of tribulacioun in mariage,
 Of which I am expert in al myn age,
 (This to seyn, myself have been the whippe), 175
 Than maystow chese wheither thou wolt sippe
 Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche.
 Be war of it, er thou to ny approche,
 For I shal telle ensamples mo than ten.
 Whoso that nyl be war by othere men, 180
 By hym shul othere men corrected be.
 The same wordes writeth Ptholomee;
 Rede it in his Almageste, and take it there."
 "Dame, I wolde praye yow, if youre wyl it were,"
 Seyde this Pardoner, "as ye bigan, 185
 Telle forth youre tale, spareth for no man,
 And teche us yonge men of your praktike."
 "Gladly," quod she, "sith it may yow like.
 But yet I praye to al this compaignye,
 If that I speke after my fantasye, 190
 As taketh not agrief of that I seye,
 For myn entente nis but for to pleye."
 —Now sire, now wol I telle forth my tale,
 As evere moote I drynken wyn or ale,
 I shal seye sooth, tho housbondes that I hadde, 195
 As thre of hem were goode, and two were badde.
 The thre men were goode, and riche, and olde;
 Unnethe myghte they the statut holde
 In which that they were bounden unto me—
 Ye woot wel what I meene of this, pardee! 200
 As help me God, I laughe whan I thynke
 How pitously anyght I made hem swynke.

172 *thee om.* 173 *that is in.* 177 *Of that.* 180 *nyl wol nat.* 182 *Protholomee*
 184 *yow om.* 188 *quod she sires.* 191 *of om.* 192 *nis is.* 195 *of tho.*

And by my fey, I tolde of it no stoor,
 They had me yeven hir gold and hir tresoor;
 Me neded nat do lenger diligence 205
 To wynne hir love, or doon hem reverence,
 They loved me so wel, by God above,
 That I ne tolde no deyntee of hir love.
 A wys womman wol sette hire evere in oon
 To gete hire love, ther as she hath noon. 210
 But sith I hadde hem hoolly in myn hond,
 And sith they hadde me yeven all hir lond,
 What sholde I taken heede hem for to plese,
 But it were for my profit and myn ese?
 I sette hem so a-werke, by my fey, 215
 That many a nyght they songen weilawey.
 The bacoun was nat fet for hem, I trowe,
 That som men han in Essex at Dunmowe.
 I governed hem so wel after my lawe,
 That ech of hem ful blisful was, and fawe 220
 To brynge me gaye thynges fro the fayre.
 They were ful glad whan I spak to hem faire,
 For God it woot, I chidde hem spitously.
 Now herkneth hou I baar me proprely,
 Ye wise wyves, that kan understonde. 225
 Thus shul ye speke and bere hem wrong on honde;
 For half so boldely kan ther no man
 Swere and lyen, as a womman kan.
 I sey nat this by wyves that been wyse,
 But if it be whan they hem mysavyse. 230
 A wys wyf, if that she kan hir good,
 Shal beren hym on hond the cow is wood,
 And take witnesse of hir owene mayde,
 Of hir assent; but herkneth how I sayde.
 "Sir olde kaynard, is this thyn array? 235
 Why is my neighebores wyf so gay?

215 werk. 220 hem was. 226 beren; *wrong om.* 228 kan a womman.
 232 bere.

She is honoured overal ther she gooth;
 I sitte at hoom, I have no thrifty clooth.
 What dostow at my neighebores hous?
 Is she so fair? artow so amorous? 240
 What rowne ye with oure mayde? benedicite,
 Sir olde lecchour, lat thy japes be!
 And if I have a gossib or a freend
 Withouten gilt, thou chidest as a feend
 If that I walke or pleye unto his hous. 245
 Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous
 And prechest on thy bench, with yvel preef!
 Thou seist to me, it is a greet meschief
 To wedde a povre womman, for costage,
 And if she be riche and of heigh parage, 250
 Thanne seistow it is a tormentrie
 To soffren hir pride and hir malencolie.
 And if she be fair, thou verray knave,
 Thou seyst that every holour wol hir have;
 She may no while in chastitee abyde 255
 That is assailed upon ech a syde.
 Thou seyst, som folk desiren us for richesse,
 Somme for oure shape, and somme for oure fairnesse,
 And som for she kan outhur synge or daunce,
 And som for gentillesse and daliaunce, 260
 Som for hir handes and hir armes smale;
 Thus goth al to the devel by thy tale.
 Thou seyst, men may nat kepe a castel wal,
 It may so longe assailed been overal.
 And if that she be foul, thou seist that she 265
 Coveiteth every man that she may se;
 For as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe
 Til that she fynde som man hir to chepe;
 Ne noon so grey goos gooth ther in the lake
 As, seistow, wol been withoute make; 270

257 that som. 258 and om. 259 kan synge and. 260 som for daliaunce
 269 ther om.

And seyst, it is an hard thyng for to welde
 A thyng that no man wole, his thanks, helde.
 Thus seistow, lorel, whan thow goost to bedde,
 And that no wys man nedeth for to wedde,
 Ne no man that entendeth unto hevene— 275
 With wilde thonderdynt and firy leve
 Moote thy welked nekke be to-broke!
 Thow seyst that droppying houses, and eek smoke,
 And chidyng wyves maken men to flee
 Out of hir owene hous, a benedicitee! 280
 What eyleth swich an old man for to chide?
 Thow seyst, we wyves wol oure vices hide
 Til we be fast, and thanne we wol hem shewe.
 Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe!
 Thou seist, that oxen, asses, hors, and houndes, 285
 They been assayd at diverse stoundes;
 Bacyns, lavours, er that men hem bye,
 Spoones and stooles, and al swich housbondrye,
 And so been pottes, clothes, and array;
 But folk of wyves maken noon assay 290
 Til they be wedded, olde dotard shrewe!
 Thanne, seistow, we wol oure vices shewe.
 Thou seist also, that it displeseth me
 But if that thou wolt preyse my beautee,
 And but thou poure alwey upon my face, 295
 And clepe me 'faire dame' in every place,
 And but thou make a feeste on thilke day
 That I was born, and make me fressh and gay,
 And but thou do to my norice honour,
 And to my chamberere withinne my bour, 300
 And to my fadres folk and hise allies—
 Thus seistow, olde barel ful of lyes!
 And yet of oure apprentice Janekyn,
 For his crisp heer, shynyng as gold so fyn,
 And for he squiereth me bothe up and down, 305

Yet hastow caught a fals suspecioun.
 I wol hym noght, thogh thou were deed tomorwe.
 But tel me this, why hydestow, with sorwe,
 The keyes of my cheste away fro me?
 It is my good as wel as thyn, pardee; 310
 What wenestow make an ydiot of oure dame?
 Now, by that lord that called is seint Jame,
 Thou shalt nat bothe, thogh that thou were wood,
 Be maister of my body and of my good;
 That oon thou shalt forgo, maugree thyne eyen. 315
 What nedeth thee of me to enquire or spyen?
 I trowe thou woldest loke me in thy chiste.
 Thou sholdest seye, 'Wyf, go wher thee liste,
 Taak youre disport, I wol not leve no talys,
 I knowe yow for a trewe wyf, dame Alys.' 320
 We love no man that taketh kepe or charge
 Wher that we goon, we wol ben at our large.
 Of alle men yblessed moot he be,
 The wise astrologien, Daun Ptholome,
 That seith this proverbe in his Almageste: 325
 'Of alle men his wysdom is the hyeste,
 That rekketh nevere who hath the world in honde.'
 By this proverbe thou shalt understonde,
 Have thou ynogh, what thar thee recche or care
 How myrily that othere folkes fare? 330
 He is to greet a nygard, that wolde werne
 A man to lighte his candle at his lanterne;
 He shal have never the lasse light, pardee, 335
 Have thou ynogh, thee thar nat pleyne thee.
 Thou seyst also, that if we make us gay
 With clothyng and with precious array,
 That it is peril of oure chastitee;
 And yet, with sorwe, thou most enforce thee, 340
 And seye thise wordes in the apostles name,
 'In habit, maad with chastitee and shame,

Ye wommen shul apparaille yow,' quod he,
 'And noght in tressed heer and gay perree,
 As perles, ne with gold, ne clothes riche.' 345
 After thy text, ne after thy rubriche
 I wol nat wirche, as muchel as a gnat!
 Thou seydest this, that I was lyk a cat;
 For whoso wolde senge a cattes skyn,
 Thanne wolde the cat wel dwellen in his in. 350
 And if the cattes skyn be slyk and gay,
 She wol nat dwelle in house half a day,
 But forth she wole, er any day be dawed,
 To shewe hir skyn, and goon a caterwawed.
 This is to seye, if I be gay, sire shrewe, 355
 I wol renne out, my borel for to shewe.
 Sire olde fool, what eyleth thee to spyen,
 Thogh thou preye Argus, with hise hundred eyen,
 To be my wardecors, as he kan best,
 In feith he shal nat kepe me but me lest; 360
 Yet koude I make his berd, so moot I thee.
 Thou seydest eek, that ther been thynges thre,
 The whiche thynges troublen al this erthe,
 And that no wight ne may endure the ferthe.
 O leewe sire shrewe, Jesu shorte thy lyf! 365
 Yet prechestow, and seyst, an hateful wyf
 Yrekened is for oon of thise meschances.
 Been ther none othere maner resemblances
 That ye may likne youre parables to,
 But if a sely wyf be oon of tho? 370
 Thou likenest wommenes love to helle,
 To bareyne lond, ther water may nat dwelle.
 Thou liknest it also to wilde fyr;
 The moore it brenneth, the moore it hath desir
 To consume every thyng that brent wole be. 375
 Thou seyst, right as wormes shendeth a tree,

Right so a wyf destroyeth hir housbond.
 This knowe they, that been to wyves bonde."

Lordynges, right thus, as ye have understonde,
 Baar I stifly myne olde housbondes on honde, 380
 That thus they seyden in hir dronkenesse,
 And al was fals, but that I took witnesse
 On Janekyn and on my nece also.
 O lord, the pyne I dide hem, and the wo
 Ful giltelees, by Goddes sweete pyne! 385
 For as an hors I koude byte and whyne,
 I koude pleyne, thogh I were in the gilt,
 Or elles often tyme hadde I been spilt.
 Who so that first to mille comth first grynt;
 I pleyned first, so was oure werre ystynt. 390
 They were ful glad to excuse hem ful blyve
 Of thyng of which they nevere agilte hir lyve.
 Of wenches wolde I beren hym on honde,
 Whan that for syk unnethes myghte he stonde,
 Yet tikled it his herte, for that he 395
 Wende that I hadde of hym so greet chiertee.
 I swoor that al my walkynge out by nyghte
 Was for tespye wenches that he dighte.
 Under that colour hadde I many a myrthe;
 For al swich thyng was yeven us in oure byrthe, 400
 Deceite, wepyng, spynnyng, God hath yeve
 To wommen kyndely whil they may lyve.
 And thus of o thyng I avaunte me,
 Atte ende I hadde the bettre in ech degree,
 By sleighte, or force, or by som maner thyng, 405
 As by continueel murmure or grucchyng.
 Namely abedde hadden they meschaunce;
 Ther wolde I chide and do hem no plesaunce,
 I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde,
 If that I felte his arm over my syde 410
 Til he had maad his raunsoun unto me;

Thanne wolde I suffre hym do his nycetee.
 And therefore every man this tale I telle,
 Wynne who so may, for al is for to selle.
 With empty hand men may none haukes lure,— 415
 For wynnyng wolde I al his lust endure
 And make me a feyned appetit;
 And yet in bacoun hadde I nevere delit;
 That made me that evere I wolde hem chide.
 For thogh the pope hadde seten hem biside, 420
 I wolde nat spare hem at hir owene bord,
 For by my trouthe I quitte hem word for word.
 As help me verray God omnipotent,
 Though I right now sholde make my testament,
 I ne owe hem nat a word, that it nys quit. 425
 I broghte it so aboute by my wit,
 That they moste yeve it up as for the beste,
 Or elles hadde we nevere been in reste.
 For thogh he looked as a wood leoun,
 Yet sholde he faille of his conclusioun. 430
 Thanne wolde I seye, "Goode lief, taak keepe,
 How mekely looketh Wilkyn oure sheepe!
 Com neer, my spouse, lat me ba thy cheke,
 Ye sholde been al pacient and meke,
 And han a sweete spiced conscience, 435
 Sith ye so preche of Jobes pacience.
 Suffreth alwey, syn ye so wel kan preche,
 And but ye do, certein we shal yow teche
 That it is fair to have a wyf in pees.
 Oon of us two moste bowen, doutelees, 440
 And sith a man is moore resonable,
 Than womman is, ye moste been suffrable."
 Swiche maner wordes hadde we on honde.
 Now wol I speken of my fourthe housbonde.
 My fourthe housbonde was a revelour,
 This is to seyn, he hadde a paramour,
 And I was yong and ful of ragerye, 455

Stibourne and strong, and joly as a pye.
 Wel koude I daunce to an harpe smale,
 And synge, ywis, as any nyghtyngale,
 Whan I had dronke a draughte of sweete wyn.
 Metellius, the foule cherl, the swyn, 460
 That with a staf birafte his wyf hire lyf,
 For she drank wyn, thogh I hadde been his wyf,
 He sholde nat han daunted me fro drynke.
 And after wyn on Venus moste I thynke,
 For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl, 465
 A likerous mouth moste han a likerous tayl.
 In wommen vinolent is no defence,
 This knowen lecchours by experience.

But, Lord Crist! whan that it remembreth me
 Upon my yowthe and on my jolitee, 470
 It tikleth me aboute myn herte-roote.
 Unto this day it dooth myn herte boote
 That I have had my world, as in my tyme.
 But age, allas, that al wole envenyme,
 Hath me biraft my beautee and my pith! 475
 Lat go, fare-wel, the devel go therwith!
 The flour is goon, ther is namoore to telle,
 The bren as I best kan, now moste I selle;
 But yet to be right myrie wol I fonde.
 Now wol I tellen of my fourthe housbonde. 480

I seye, I hadde in herte greet despit
 That he of any oother had delit;
 But he was quit, by God and by Seint Joce!
 I made hym of the same wode a croce;
 Nat of my body in no foul manere, 485
 But certainly, I made folk swich cheere
 That in his owene grece I made hym frye
 For angre and for verray jalousye.
 By God, in erthe I was his purgatorie,
 For which I hope his soule be in glorie, 490

For God it woot, he sat ful ofte and song
 Whan that his shoo ful bitterly hym wrong!
 Ther was no wight save God and he, that wiste
 In many wise how soore I hym twiste.
 He deyde whan I cam fro Jerusalem, 495
 And lith ygrave under the roode-beem,
 Al is his tombe noght so curyus
 As was the sepulcre of hym Daryus,
 Which that Appelles wroghte subtilly.
 It nys but wast to burye hym preciously, 500
 Lat hym fare-wel, God yeve his soule reste,
 He is now in his grave, and in his cheste.
 Now of my fifthe housbonde wol I telle.
 God lete his soule nevere come in helle!
 And yet was he to me the mooste shrewe; 505
 That feele I on my ribbes al by rewe,
 And evere shal, unto myn endyng day.
 But in oure bed he was ful fressh and gay,
 And therwithal so wel koude he me glose
 Whan that he wolde han my bele chose, 510
 That thogh he hadde me bet on every bon
 He koude wynne agayn my love anon.
 I trowe I loved hym beste, for that he
 Was of his love daungerous to me.
 We wommen han, if that I shal nat lye, 515
 In this matere a queynte fantasye;
 Wayte what thyng we may nat lightly have,
 Ther-after wol we crie al day and crave.
 Forbede us thyng, and that desiren we;
 Preesse on us faste, and thanne wol we fle; 520
 With daunger oute we al oure chaffare.
 Greet prees at market maketh deere ware,
 And to greet cheep is holde at litel prys;
 This knoweth every womman that is wys.
 My fifthe housbonde, God his soule blesse, 525

Which that I took for love and no richesse,
 He somtyme was a clerk of Oxenford,
 And hadde left scole, and wente at hom to bord
 With my gossib, dwellynge in oure toun,
 God have hir soule! hir name was Alisoun. 530
 She knew myn herte and eek my privetee
 Bet than oure parisshe preest, as moot I thee.
 To hir biwreyed I my conseil al,
 For hadde myn housbonde pissed on a wal,
 Or doon a thyng that sholde han cost his lyf, 535
 To hir, and to another worthy wyf,
 And to my nece, which that I loved weel,
 I wolde han toold his conseil every deel.
 And so I dide ful often, God it woot!
 That made his face ful often reed and hoot 540
 For verray shame, and blamed hym-self, for he
 Had toold to me so greet a pryvetee.

And so bifel that ones, in a Lente—
 So often tymes I to my gossyb wente,
 For evere yet I loved to be gay, 545
 And for to walke in March, Averill, and May,
 Fro hous to hous to heere sondry talys—
 That Jankyn Clerk and my gossyb, dame Alys,
 And I myself into the feeldes wente.
 Myn housbonde was at London al that Lente; 550
 I hadde the bettre leyser for to pleye,
 And for to se, and eek for to be seye
 Of lusty folk; what wiste I, wher my grace
 Was shapen for to be, or in what place?
 Therefore I made my visitaciouns 555
 To vigilies and to processiouns,
 To prechyng eek, and to thise pilgrimages,
 To pleyes of myracles, and to mariages;
 And wered upon my gaye scarlet gytes.
 Thise wormes ne thise motthes, ne thise mytes, 560

Upon my peril, frete hem never a deel—
And wostow why? for they were used weel!

Now wel I tellen forth what happed me.

I seye, that in the feeldes walked we,
Til trewely we hadde swich daliance, 565

This clerk and I, that of my purveiance
I spak to hym, and seyde hym, how that he,
If I were wydwe, sholde wedde me.

For certainly, I sey for no bobance,
Yet was I nevere withouten purveiance 570
Of mariage, nof othere thynges eek.

I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek
That hath but oon hole for to sterte to,
And if that faille, thanne is al ydo.

I bar hym on honde, he hadde enchanted me— 575
My dame taughte me that soutiltee.

And eek I seyde, I mette of hym al nyght,
He wolde han slayn me as I lay upright,
And al my bed was ful of verray blood;
But yet I hope that he shal do me good, 580

For blood bitokeneth gold, as me was taught—
And al was fals, I dremed of it right naught,
But as I folwed ay my dames loore
As wel of this, as of othere thynges moore.

But now sir, lat me se, what I shal seyn? 585
A ha, by God! I have my tale ageyn.

Whan that my fourthe housbonde was on beere,
I weep algate, and made sory cheere,
As wyves mooten—for it is usage—
And with my coverchief covered my visage; 590

But for that I was purveyed of a make,
I wepte but smal, and that I undertake.
To chirche was myn housbonde born amorwe
With neighebores that for hym maden sorwe;
And Janekyn oure clerk was oon of tho. 595

As help me God, whan that I saugh hym go
 After the beere, me thoughte he hadde a paire
 Of legges and of feet so clene and faire,
 That al myn herte I yaf unto his hoold.
 He was, I trowe, a twenty wynter oold, 600
 And I was fourty, if I shal seye sooth,
 But yet I hadde alwey a coltes tooth.
 Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me weel,
 I hadde the prente of Seinte Venus seel.
 As help me God, I was a lusty oon, 605
 And faire, and riche, and yong, and wel bigon,
 And trewely, as myne housbondes tolde me,
 I hadde the beste quonyam myghte be.
 For certes, I am al Venerien
 In feelynge, and myn herte is Marcien. 610
 Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnesse,
 And Mars yaf me my sturdy hardynesse.
 Myn ascendent was Taur, and Mars therinne,
 Allas, allas, that evere love was synne!
 I folwed ay myn inclinacioun 615
 By vertu of my constellacioun;
 That made me I koude noght withdrawe
 My chambre of Venus from a good felawe.
 Yet have I Martes mark upon my face,
 And also in another privee place. 620
 For God so wys be my savacioun,
 I ne loved nevere by no discrecioun,
 But evere folwede myn appetit,
 Al were he short, or long, or blak, or whit.
 I took no kepe, so that he liked me, 625
 How poore he was, ne eek of what degree.
 What sholde I seye, but at the monthes ende
 This joly clerk Jankyn, that was so hende,
 Hath wedded me with greet solempnytee,
 And to hym yaf I al the lond and fee 630

That evere was me yeven therbifoore;
 But afterward repented me ful soore,
 He nolde suffre nothyng of my list.
 By God, he smoot me ones on the lyst
 For that I rente out of his book a leef, 635
 That of the strook myn ere wax al deef.
 Stibourne I was as is a leonesse,
 And of my tonge a verray jangleresse,
 And walke I wolde, as I had doon biforn,
 From hous to hous, although he had it sworn, 640
 For which he often-tymes wolde preche,
 And me of olde Romain geestes teche,
 How he Symplicius Gallus lefte his wyf,
 And hir forsook for terme of al his lyf,
 Noght but for open-heveded he hir say, 645
 Lookynge out at his dore, upon a day.
 Another Romain tolde he me by name,
 That for his wyf was at a someres game
 Withoute his wityng, he forsook hir eke.
 And thanne wolde he upon his Bible seke 650
 That ilke proverbe of Ecclesiaste,
 Where he comandeth, and forbedeth faste,
 Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule aboute,
 Thanne wolde he seye right thus, withouten doute:
 "Who so that buyldeth his hous al of salwes, 655
 And priketh his blynde hors over the falwes,
 And suffreth his wyf to go seken halwes,
 Is worthy to been hanged on the galwes!"
 But al for noght, I sette noght an hawe
 Of his proverbes, nof his olde lawe, 660
 Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be.
 I hate hym that my vices telleth me;
 And so doo mo, God woot, of us than I!
 This made hym with me wood al outrely,
 I nolde noght forbere hym in no cas. 665

Now wol I seye yow sooth, by seint Thomas,
Why that I rente out of his book a leef,
For which he smoot me so that I was deef.
He hadde a book that gladly, nyght and day,
For his desport he wolde rede alway. 670
He cleped it 'Valerie and Theofraste,'
At whiche book he lough alwey ful faste.
And eek ther was som tyme a clerk at Rome,
A cardinal that highte Seint Jerome,
That made a book agayn Jovinian, 675
In whiche book eek ther was Tertulan,
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowys,
That was abbesse nat fer fro Parys,
And eek the Parables of Salomon,
Ovides Art, and bookes many on, 680
And alle thise were bounden in o volume,
And every nyght and day was his custume
Whan he hadde leyser and vacacioun
From oother worldly occupacioun
To reden on this book of wikked wyves. 685
He knew of hem no legendes and lyves
Than been of goode wyves in the Bible.
For trusteth wel, it is an impossible
That any clerk wol speke good of wyves,
But if it be of hooly scintes lyves, 690
Ne noon oother womman never the mo.
Who peyntede the leoun, tel me, who?
By God, if wommen hadde writen stories,
As clerkes han withinne hire oratories,
They wolde han writen of men moore wikkednesse 695
Than all the mark of Adam may redresse.
The children of Mercurie and Venus
Been in hir wirkyng ful contrarius,
Mercurie loveth wysdam and science,
And Venus loveth ryot and dispence. 700

And for hire diverse disposicioun
 Ech falleth in otheres exaltacioun,
 And thus, God woot, Mercurie is desolat
 In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat;
 And Venus falleth ther Mercurie is reysed. 705
 Therefore no womman of no clerk is preysed.
 The clerk, whan he is oold and may noght do
 Of Venus werkes worth his olde sho,
 Thanne sit he doun, and writ in his dotage
 That wommen kan nat kepe hir mariage. 710

But now to purpos, why I tolde thee
 That I was beten for a book, pardee.
 Upon a nyght Jankyn, that was oure sire,
 Redde on his book as he sat by the fire
 Of Eva first, that for hir wikkednesse 715
 Was al mankynde broght to wrecchednesse,
 For which that Jesu Crist hymself was slayn,
 That boghte us with his herte-blood agayn.
 Lo, heere expres of womman may ye fynde,
 That womman was the los of al mankynde. 720
 Tho redde he me how Sampson loste hise heres,
 Slepynge, his lemman kitte it with hir sheres,
 Thurgh whiche tresoun loste he bothe hise eyen.
 Tho redde he me, if that I shal nat lyen,
 Of Hercules and of his Dianyre, 725
 That caused hym to sette hymself afyre.
 No thyng forgat he the penaunce and wo
 That Socrates hadde with hise wyves two,
 How Xantippa caste pisse up-on his heed.
 This sely man sat stille as he were deed; 730
 He wiped his heed, namoore dorste he seyn
 But, "er that thonder stynte, comth a reyn."
 Of Phasifpha, that was the queene of Crete,
 For shrewednesse hym thoughte the tale swete—
 Fy, speke namoore! it is a grisly thyng 735

Of hir horrible lust and hir likyng.
 Of Clitermystra for hire lecherye,
 That falsly made hir housbonde for to dye,
 He redde it with ful good devocioun.
 He tolde me eek for what occasioun 740
 Amphiorax at Thebes loste his lyf.
 Myn housbonde hadde a legende of his wyf
 Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold
 Hath prively unto the Grekes told
 Wher that hir housbonde hidde hym in a place, 745
 For which he hadde at Thebes sory grace.
 Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucye,
 They bothe made hir housbondes for to dye,
 That oon for love, that oother was for hate.
 Lyma hir housbonde, on an even late, 750
 Empoysoned hath, for that she was his fo.
 Lucia likerous loved hir housbonde so,
 That for he sholde alwey upon hire thynke,
 She yaf hym swich a manere love-drynke
 That he was deed, er it were by the morwe. 755
 And thus algates housbondes han sorw.
 Thanne tolde he me, how that Latumyus
 Compleyned unto his felawe Arrius,
 That in his gardyn growed swich a tree,
 On which he seyde how that hise wyves thre 760
 Hanged hemself, for herte despitus.
 "O leeve brother," quod this Arrius,
 "Yif me a plante of thilke blissed tree,
 And in my gardyn planted it shal bee."
 Of latter date of wyves hath he red, 765
 That somme han slayn hir housbondes in hir bed,
 And lete hir lecchour dighte hir al the nyght,
 Whan that the corps lay in the floor upright.
 And somme han dryve nayles in hir brayn
 Whil that they slepte, and thus they han hem slayn. 770

Somme han hem yeve poysoun in hir drynke.

He spak moore harm than herte may bithynke,
And therwithal he knew of mo proverbes

Than in this world ther growen gras or herbes.

"Bet is," quod he, "thyn habitacioun

775

Be with a leoun, or a foul dragoun,

Than with a womman usynge for to chyde."

"Bet is," quod he, "hye in the roof abyde

Than with an angry wyf doun in the hous,

They been so wikked and contrarious.

780

They haten that hir housbondes loveth ay."

He seyde, "a womman cast hir shame away

Whan she cast of hir smok," and forther mo,

"A fair womman, but she be chaast also,

Is lyk a golddryng in a sowes nose."

785

Who wolde leeve, or who wolde suppose

The wo that in myn herte was, and pyne?

And whan I saugh he wolde nevere fyne

To reden on this cursed book al nyght,

Al sodeynly thre leves have I plyght

790

Out of his book, right as he radde, and eke

I with my fest so took hym on the cheke,

That in oure fyr he fil bakward adoun.

And he up-stirte as dooth a wood leoun,

And with his fest he smoot me on the heed

795

That in the floor I lay, as I were deed.

And whan he saugh how stille that I lay,

He was agast, and wolde han fled his way,

Til atte laste out of my swogh I breyde.

"O, hastow slayn me, false thief," I seyde,

800

"And for my land thus hastow mordred me?

Er I be deed, yet wol I kisse thee."

And neer he cam and kneled faire adoun,

And seyde, "deere suster Alisoun,

As help me God, I shal thee nevere smyte.

805

That I have doon, it is thyself to wyte,

Foryeve it me, and that I thee biseke."
 And yet eftsoones I hitte hym on the cheke,
 And seyde, "theef, thus muchel am I wreke;
 Now wol I dye, I may no lenger speke." 810
 But atte laste, with muchel care and wo,
 We fille acorded by us selven two.
 He yaf me al the bridel in myn hond,
 To han the governance of hous and lond,
 And of his tonge, and of his hond also, 815
 And made hym brenne his book anon right tho.
 And whan that I hadde geten unto me
 By maistrie, al the soveraynetee,
 And that he seyde, "myn owene trewe wyf,
 Do as thee lust the terme of al thy lyf, 820
 Keepe thyn honour, and keep eek myn estaat,"
 After that day we hadden never debaat.
 God help me so, I was to hym as kynde
 As any wyf from Denmark unto Ynde,
 And also trewe, and so was he to me. 825
 I prey to God, that sit in magestee,
 So blesse his soule for his mercy deere.
 Now wol I seye my tale, if ye wol heere.

Biholde the wordes bitwene the Somonour and the Frere.

The Frere lough whan he hadde herd al this.—
 "Now dame," quod he, "so have I joye or blis, 830
 This is a long preamble of a tale."
 And whan the Somonour herde the Frere gale,
 "Lo," quod the Somonour, "Goddess armes two,
 A frere wol entremette hym evere-mo.
 Lo goode men, a flye and eek a frere 835
 Wol falle in every dyssh and eek mateere.
 What spekestow of preambulacioun?
 What, amble, or trotte, or pees, or go sit down,

Thou lettest oure disport in this manere.”
“Ye, woltow so, sire Somonour?” quod the frere, 840
“Now by my feith, I shal er that I go
Telle of a Somonour swich a tale or two
That alle the folk shal laughen in this place.”
“Now elles, frere, I bishrewe thy face,”
Quod this Somonour, “and I bishrewe me, 845
But if I telle tales two or thre
Of freres, er I come to Sidingborne,
That I shal make thyn herte for to morne,
For wel I woot thy pacience is gon.”
Oure Hooste cride, “Pees, and that anon!” 850
And seyde, “lat the womman telle hire tale,
Ye fare as folk that dronken were of ale.
Do, dame, telle forth youre tale, and that is best.”
“Al redy, sire,” quod she, “right as yow lest,
If I have licence of this worthy frere.” 855
“Yis, dame,” quod he, “tel forth, and I wol heere.”

Heere endeth the Wyf of Bathe hir Prologe.

THE TALE OF THE WYF OF BATH

Here bigynneth the Tale of the Wyf of Bathe.

In tholde dayes of the Kyng Arthour,
Of which that Britons speken greet honour,
All was this land fulfild of Fayerye.
The elf-queene, with hir joly compaignye, 860
Daunced ful ofte in many a grene mede;
This was the olde opinion, as I rede.
I speke of manye hundred yeres ago;
But now kan no man se none elves mo,
For now the grete charitee and prayeres 865
Of lymytours, and othere hooly freres,
That serchen every lond and every streem
As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem,
Blessynge halles, chambres, kichenes, boures,
Citees, burghes, castels, hye toures, 870
Thropes, bernes, shipnes, dayeryes,
This maketh that ther been no Fayeryes.
For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the lymytour hymself
In undermeles and in morwenynges, 875
And seyth his matyns and his hooly thynges
As he gooth in his lymytacioun.
Wommen may go saufly up and down;
In every bussh or under every tree
Ther is noon oother incubus but he, 880
And he ne wol doon hem but dishonour.

And so bifel it that this kyng Arthour
Hadde in his hous a lusty bachelor,
That on a day cam ridynge fro ryver;
And happed that, allone as she was born, 885

He saugh a mayde walkynge hym biforn,
 Of whiche mayde anon, maugree hir heed,
 By verray force he rafte hir maydenhed;
 For which oppressioun was swich clamour
 And swich pursute unto the kyng Arthour, 890
 That dampned was this knyght for to be deed
 By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his heed,
 Paraventure, swich was the statut thow,
 But that the queene and othere ladyes mo
 So longe preyeden the kyng of grace, 895
 Til he his lyf hym graunted in the place,
 And yaf hym to the queene al at hir wille;
 To chese, wheither she wolde hym save or spille.
 The queene thanketh the kyng with al hir myght,
 And after this thus spak she to the knyght, 900
 Whan that she saugh hir tyme, upon a day,
 "Thou standest yet," quod she, "in swich array
 That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee.
 I grante thee lyf, if thou kanst tellen me
 What thyng is it that wommen moost desiren. 905
 Be war and keep thy nekke-boon from iren,
 And if thou kanst nat tellen it anon,
 Yet shal I yeve thee leve for to gon
 A twelf-month and a day to seche and leere
 An answeere suffisant in this mateere; 910
 And suretee wol I han, er that thou pace,
 Thy body for to yelden in this place."

Wo was this knyght, and sorwefully he siketh,
 But what! he may nat do al as hym liketh;
 And at the laste he chees hym for to wende, 915
 And come agayn right at the yeres ende,
 With swich answeere as God wolde hym purveye;
 And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth his weye.
 He seketh every hous and every place,
 Where as he hopeth for to fynde grace 920

To lerne what thyng wommen loven moost;
 But he ne koude arryven in no coost
 Wher as he myghte fynde in this mateere
 Two creatures accordynge in feere.
 Somme seyde, wommen loven best richesse, 925
 Somme seyde honour, somme seyde jolynesse,
 Somme riche array, somme seyden lust abedde,
 And oftetyme to be wydwe and wedde.
 Somme seyde, that oure hertes been moost esed
 Whan that we been yflatered and yplesed— 930
 He gooth ful ny the sothe, I wol nat lye,
 A man shal wynne us best with flaterye;
 And with attendance and with bisynesse
 Been we ylymed, bothe moore and lesse.—
 And somme seyn, how that we loven best 935
 For to be free, and do right as us lest,
 And that no man repreve us of oure vice,
 But seye that we be wise, and nothyng nyce.
 For trewely, ther is noon of us alle,
 If any wight wol clawe us on the galle, 940
 That we nel kike; for he seith us sooth;
 Assay, and he shal fynde it that so dooth.
 For be we never so vicious withinne,
 We wol been holden wise, and clene of synne.
 And somme seyn, that greet delit han we 945
 For to been holden stable and eke secree,
 And in o purpos stedefastly to dwelle,
 And nat biwreye thyng that men us telle.
 But that tale is nat worth a rake-stele,
 Pardee, we wommen konne no thyng hele. 950
 Witnesse on Myda—wol ye heere the tale?
 Ovyde, amonges othere thynges smale,
 Seyde, Myda hadde under his longe heres
 Growynge upon his heed two asses eres,
 The whiche vice he hydde, as he best myghte, 955

Ful subtilly from every mannes sighte;
 That, save his wyf, ther wiste of it namo,
 He loved hir moost and trusted hir also.
 He preyede hir, that to no creature
 She sholde tellen of his disfigure. 960
 She swoor him nay, for al this world to wynne,
 She nolde do that vileynye or synne,
 To make hir housbonde han so foul a name,
 She nolde nat telle it for hir owene shame!
 But nathelees, hir thoughte that she dyde, 965
 That she so longe sholde a conseil hyde,
 Hir thoughte it swal so soore aboute hir herte
 That nedely som word hir moste asterte.
 And sith she dorste telle it to no man,
 Doun to a mareys faste by she ran, 970
 Til she came there, hir herte was afyre,
 And as a bitore bombleth in the myre,
 She leyde hir mouth unto the water down;—
 “Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy soun,”
 Quod she, “to thee I telle it and namo, 975
 Myn housbonde hath longe asses erys two!
 Now is myn herte al hool, now is it oute,
 I myghte no lenger kepe it, out of doute.”
 Heere may ye se, thogh we a tyme abyde,
 Yet out it moot, we kan no conseil hyde.— 980
 The remenant of the tale, if ye wol heere,
 Redeth Ovyde, and ther ye may it leere.—
 This knyght, of which my tale is specially,
 Whan that he saugh he myghte nat come therby,
 This is to seye, what wommen love moost, 985
 Withinne his brest ful sorweful was the goost.
 But hoom he gooth, he myghte nat sojournè;
 The day was come that homward moste he tourne,
 And in his wey it happed hym to ryde
 In al this care under a forest syde, 990

Wher as he saugh upon a daunce go
 Of ladyes foure and twenty, and yet mo;
 Toward the whiche daunce he drow ful-yerne,
 In hope that som wysdom sholde he lerne.
 But certainly, er he came fully there, 995
 Vanysshed was this daunce, he nyste where;
 No creature saugh he that bar lyf,
 Save on the grene he saugh sittynge a wyf,
 A fouler wight ther may no man devyse.
 Agayn the knyght this olde wyf gan ryse, 1000
 And seyde, "Sire knyght, heer-forth ne lith no wey;
 Tel me what that ye seken, by your fey.
 Paraventure it may the bettre be,
 Thise olde folk kan muchel thyng," quod she.
 "My leeve mooder," quod this knyght, "certeyn, 1005
 I nam but deed, but if that I kan seyn
 What thyng it is, that wommen moost desire.
 Koude ye me wisse, I wolde wel quite youre hire."
 "Plight me thy trouthe, heere in myn hand," quod she,
 "The nexte thyng that I requere thee, 1010
 Thou shalt it do, if it lye in thy myght,
 And I wol telle it yow, er it be nyght."
 "Have heer my trouthe," quod the knyght, "I grante."
 "Thanne," quod she, "I dar me wel avante,
 Thy lyf is sauf, for I wol stonde therby 1015
 Upon my lyf, the queene wol seye as I.
 Lat se which is the proudeste of hem alle,
 That wereth on a coverchief or a calle,
 That dar seye nay of that I shal thee teche.
 Lat us go forth withouten lenger speche." 1020
 Tho rowned she a pistel in his ere,
 And bad hym to be glad and have no fere.
 Whan they be comen to the court, this knyght
 Seyde he had holde his day, as he hadde hight,
 And redy was his answeere, as he sayde. 1025

Ful many a noble wyf, and many a mayde,
 And many a wydwe, for that they been wise,
 The queene hirself sittynge as a justise,
 Assembled been, his answeere for to heere;
 And afterward this knyght was bode appeere. 1030
 To every wight comanded was silence,
 And that the knyght sholde telle in audience
 What thyng that worldly wommen loven best.
 This knyght ne stood nat stille, as doth a best,
 But to his questioun anon answerde 1035
 With manly voys, that al the court it herde:
 "My lige lady, generally," quod he,
 "Wommen desiren to have sovereynetee
 As wel over hir housbond as hir love,
 And for to been in maistrie hym above. 1040
 This is youre mooste desir, thogh ye me kille,
 Dooth as yow list, I am heer at youre wille."
 In al the court ne was ther wyf ne mayde
 Ne wydwe that contraried that he sayde,
 But seyden he was worthy han his lyf. 1045
 And with that word up stirte the olde wyf,
 Which that the knyght saugh sittynge in the grene.
 "Mercy," quod she, "my sovereyn lady queene,
 Er that youre court departe, do me right.
 I taughte this answeere unto the knyght, 1050
 For which he plighte me his trouthe there,
 The firste thyng I wolde of hym requere,
 He wolde it do, if it lay in his myght.
 Bifor the court thanne preye I thee, sir kynght,"
 Quod she, "that thou me take unto thy wyf, 1055
 For wel thou woost that I have kept thy lyf.
 If I seye fals, sey nay, upon thy fey!"
 This knyght answerde, "Allas and weylawey!
 I woot right wel that swich was my biheste!
 For Goddes love, as chees a newe requeste, 1060

Taak al my good, and lat my body go!"

"Nay, thanne," quod she, "I shrewe us bothe two,

For thogh that I be foul, and oold, and poore,

I nolde for al the metal, ne for oore,

That under erthe is grave, or lith above, 1065

But if thy wyf I were, and eek thy love."

"My love?" quod he, "nay, my dampnacioun!

Allas, that any of my nacioun

Sholde evere so foule disparaged be!"

But al for noght, the ende is this, that he 1070

Constreyned was, he nedes moste hir wedde,

And taketh his olde wyf, and gooth to bedde.

Now wolden som men seye, paraventure,

That for my necligence I do no cure

To tellen yow the joye and al tharray, 1075

That at the feeste was that ilke day;

To whiche thyng shortly answer I shal.

I seye, ther nas no joye ne feeste at al,

Ther nas but hevynesse and muche sorwe,

For prively he wedde hir on a morwe, 1080

And al day after hidde hym as an owle,

So wo was hym, his wyf looked so foule.

Greet was the wo the knyght hadde in his thought,

Whan he was with his wyf abedde ybrought,

He walweth and he turneth to and fro. 1085

His olde wyf lay smyllynge everemo,

And seyde, "O deere housbonde, benedicitee,

Fareth every knyght thus with his wyf, as ye?

Is this the lawe of Kyng Arthures hous?

Is every knyght of his so dangerous? 1090

I am youre owene love, and eek your wyf;

I am she which that saved hath youre lyf.

And certes, yet dide I yow nevere unright;

Why fare ye thus with me this firste nyght?

1063 *and* (1) *om.* 1070 *thende.* 1077 *which.* 1080 *wedded.* 1091 *eek om.*
1093 *ne dide.*

Ye faren lyk a man had lost his wit. 1095
 What is my gilt? for Goddes love, tel it,
 And it shal been amended, if I may."
 "Amended," quod this knyght, "allas! nay! nay!
 It wol nat been amended nevere mo;
 Thou art so loothly and so oold also 1100
 And therto comen of so lough a kynde,
 That litel wonder is thogh I walwe and wynde.
 So wolde God, myn herte wolde breste!"
 "Is this," quod she, "the cause of youre unreste?"
 "Ye, certainly," quod he, "no wonder is!" 1105
 "Now, sire," quod she, "I koude amende al this,
 If that me liste, er it were dayes thre,
 So wel ye myghte here yow unto me.

But for ye speken of swich gentillesse
 As is descended out of old richesse, 1110
 That therfore sholden ye be gentil men,
 Swich arrogance nis nat worth an hen.
 Looke who that is moost vertuous alway,
 Pryvee and apert, and moost entendeth ay
 To do the gentil dedes that he kan, 1115
 Taak hym for the grettest gentil-man.
 Crist wole, we clayme of hym oure gentillesse,
 Nat of oure eldres for hire old richesse.
 For thogh they yeve us al hir heritage,
 For which we clayme to been of heigh parage, 1120
 Yet may they nat biquethe for no thyng
 To noon of us hir vertuous lyvyng,
 That made hem gentil men ycalled be,
 And bad us folwen hem in swich degree.
 Wel kan the wise poete of Florence, 1125
 That highte Dant, speken in this sentence.
 Lo in swich maner rym is Dantes tale:
 'Ful selde upriseth by his branches smale
 Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse

Wole, that of hym we clayme oure gentillesse.' 1130
 For of oure eldres may we no thyng clayme
 But temporel thyng, that man may hurte and mayme.
 Eek every wight woot this as wel as I,
 If gentillesse were planted natureelly
 Unto a certeyn lynage down the lyne, 1135
 Pryvee nor apert, thanne wolde they nevere fyne
 To doon of gentillesse the faire office,
 They myghte do no vileynye or vice.
 Taak fyr, and ber it in the derkeste hous
 Bitwix this and the mount of Kaukasous, 1140
 And lat men shette the dores and go thenne,
 Yet wole the fyr as faire lye and brenne
 As twenty thousand men myghte it biholde;
 His office natureel ay wol it holde,
 Up peril of my lyf, til that it dye. 1145

Heere may ye se wel, how that genterye
 Is nat annexed to possessioun,
 Sith folk ne doon hir operacioun
 Alwey, as dooth the fyr, lo, in his kynde.
 For God it woot, men may wel often fynde 1150
 A lordes sone do shame and vileynye,
 And he that wole han pris of his gentrye,
 For he was boren of a gentil hous,
 And hadde hise eldres noble and vertuous,
 And nel hym-selven do no gentil dedis, 1155
 Ne folwen his gentil auncestre that deed is,
 He nys nat gentil, be he duc or erl;
 For vileyns synful dedes make a cherl.
 For gentillesse nys but renomee
 Of thyne auncestres for hire heigh bountee, 1160
 Which is a strange thyng to thy persone.
 Thy gentillesse cometh fro God allone,
 Thanne comth oure verray gentillesse of grace,
 It was no thyng biquethe us with oure place.

Thenketh hou noble, as seith Valerius, 1165
 Was thilke Tullius Hostillius,
 That out of poverte roos to heigh noblesse.
 Reedeth Senek, and redeth eek Boece,
 Ther shul ye seen expres that it no drede is,
 That he is gentil that dooth gentil dedis. 1170
 And therfore, leewe housbonde, I thus conclude,
 Al were it that myne auncestres weren rude,
 Yet may the hye God—and so hope I,—
 Grante me grace to lyven vertuously.
 Thanne am I gentil whan that I bigynne 1175
 To lyven vertuously, and weyve synne.
 And ther as ye of poverte me repreeve,
 The hye God, on whom that we bileeve
 In wilful poverte chees to lyve his lyf.
 And certes every man, mayden or wyf, 1180
 May understonde that Jesus, hevene kyng,
 Ne wolde nat chesen vicious lyvyng.
 Glad poverte is an honeste thyng, certeyn,
 This wole Senec and othere clerkes seyn.
 Who so that halt hym payd of his poverte, 1185
 I holde hym riche, al hadde he nat a sherte;
 He that coveiteth is a povre wight,
 For he wolde han that is nat in his myght,
 But he that noght hath, ne coveiteth have,
 Is riche, although ye holde hym but a knave. 1190
 Verray poverte, it syngeth proprely.
 Juvenal seith of poverte myrily,
 ‘The povre man, whan he goth by the weye,
 Bifore the theves he may synge and pleye.’
 Poverte is hateful good, and, as I gesse, 1195
 A ful greet bryngere out of bisynesse;
 A greet amender eek of sapience
 To hym that taketh it in pacience.
 Poverte is this, although it seme elenge;

Possessioun, that no wight wol chalenge. 1200
 Poverte ful ofte, whan a man is lowe,
 Maketh his God and eek hymself to knowe;
 Poverte a spectacle is, as thynketh me,
 Thurgh which he may hise verray freendes see.
 And therfore, sire, syn that I noght yow greve, 1205
 Of my poverte namoore ye me repreve.

Now sire, of elde ye repreve me,
 And certes, sire, thogh noon auctoritee
 Were in no book, ye gentils of honour
 Seyn, that men sholde an oold wight doon favour, 1210
 And clepe hym fader for youre gentillesse,
 And auctours shal I fynden, as I gesse.

Now, ther ye seye that I am foul and old,
 Than drede you noght to been a cokewold;
 For filthe and eelde, al so moot I thee, 1215
 Been grete wardeyns upon chastitee;
 But nathelees, syn I knowe youre delit,
 I shal fulfille youre worldly appetit."

"Chese now," quod she, "oon of thise thynges tweye:
 To han me foul and old til that I dcye, 1220
 And be to yow a trewe humble wyf,
 And nevere yow displese in al my lyf;
 Or elles ye wol han me yong and fair,
 And take youre aventure of the repair
 That shal be to youre hous, by cause of me, 1225
 Or in som oother place may wel be.
 Now chese yourselven wheither that yow liketh."

This knyght avyseth hym and sore siketh,
 But atte laste, he seyde in this manere:
 "My lady and my love, and wyf so deere, 1230
 I put me in youre wise governance.
 Cheseth yourself, which may be moost plesance
 And moost honour to yow and me also.
 I do no fors the wheither of the two,
 For, as yow liketh, it suffiseth me." 1235

"Thanne have I gete of yow maistrie," quod she,
 "Syn I may chese and governe as me lest?"
 "Ye, certes, wyf," quod he, "I holde it best."
 "Kys me," quod she, "we be no lenger wrothe,
 For, by my trouthe, I wol be to yow bothe! 1240
 This is to seyn, ye, bothe fair and good.
 I prey to God that I moote sterven wood
 But I to yow be al so good and trewe
 As evere was wyf, syn that the world was newe.
 And but I be tomorn as fair to seene 1245
 As any lady, emperice or queene,
 That is bitwixe the est and eke the west,
 Dooth with my lyf and deth right as yow lest.
 Cast up the curtyng, looke how that it is."

And whan the knyght saugh verrailly al this, 1250
 That she so fair was, and so yong therto,
 For joye he hente hire in hise armes two.
 His herte bathed in a bath of blisse,
 A thousand tyme arewe he gan hir kisse,
 And she obeyed hym in every thyng 1255
 That myghte doon hym plesance or likyng.

And thus they lyve unto hir lyves ende
 In parfit joye;—and Jesu Crist us sende
 Housbondes meeke, yonge, fressh abedde,
 And grace toverbyde hem that we wedde. 1260
 And eek I praye Jesu shorte hir lyves,
 That nat wol be governed by hir wyves;
 And olde and angry nygardes of dispenche,
 God sende hem soone verray pestilence!

1261 pray.

Heere endeth the Wyves tale of Bathe.

PROLOGUE TO THE FRERES TALE

The Prologe of the Freres Tale.

This worthy lymytour, this noble frere, 1265
He made alwey a maner louryng chiere
Upon the Somonour, but for honestee
No vileyns word as yet to hym spak he.
But atte laste he seyde unto the wyf,
“Dame,” quod he, “God yeve yow right good lyf! 1270
Ye han heer touched, also moot I thee,
In scole-matere greet difficultee.
Ye han seyde mucche thyng right wel, I seye.
But dame, heere as we ryde by the weye
Us nedeth nat to speken but of game, 1275
And lete auctoritees, on Goddes name,
To prechyng and to scole eek of clergie.
But if it lyke to this compaignye,
I wol yow of a somonour telle a game.
Pardee, ye may wel knowe by the name 1280
That of a somonour may no good be sayd;
I praye that noon of you be yvele apayd.
A somonour is a renner up and doun
With mandementz for fornicacioun,
And is ybet at every townes ende.” 1285
Oure Hoost tho spak, “A sire, ye sholde be hende
And curteys, as a man of youre estat.
In compaignye we wol have no debaat.
Telleth youre tale, and lat the Somonour be.”
“Nay,” quod the Somonour, “lat hym seye to me 1290
What so hym list. Whan it comth to my lot,
By God I shal hym quiten every grot.
I shal hym tellen which a greet honour
It is to be a flaterynge lymytour,

And his office I shal hym telle, ywis."

1295

Oure Hoost answerde, "Pees, namoore of this!"

And after this he seyde unto the Frere,

"Tel forth youre tale, leeve maister deere."

THE TALE.

[How a Summoner, meeting a devil dressed as a yeoman, agrees to share gifts with him as a friend; and is himself consigned to the devil by a poor old woman. Then follow the Summoner's Prologue and Tale of an insult put by a goodman upon a greedy friar.]

GROUP E.

THE CLERKES TALE—PROLOGUE

Heere folweth the Prologe of the clerkes tale of Oxenford.

“Sire clerk of Oxenford,” oure Hooste sayde,
“Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a mayde,
Were newe spoused, sittynge at the bord.
This day ne herde I of youre tonge a word.
I trowe ye studie about som sophyme; 5
But Salomon seith, ‘every thyng hath tyme.’
For Goddes sake, as beth of better cheere;
It is no tyme for to studien heere,
Telle us som myrie tale, by youre fey.
For what man that is entred in a pley, 10
He nedes moot unto the pley assente;
But precheth nat as freres doon in Lente,
To make us for oure olde synnes wepe,
Ne that thy tale make us nat to slepe.
Telle us som murie thyng of adventures; 15
Your termes, youre colours, and youre figures,
Keep hem in stoor, til so be that ye endite
Heigh style, as whan that men to kynges write.
Speketh so pleyn at this tyme, we yow preye,
That we may understonde what ye seye.” 20
This worthy clerk benignely answerde,
“Hooste,” quod he, “I am under youre yerde.
Ye han of us as now the governance;
And therfore wol I do yow obeisance
As fer as resoun axeth, hardily. 25
I wol yow telle a tale, which that I
Lerned at Padwe of a worthy clerk,

As preved by his wordes and his werk.
 He is now deed, and nayled in his cheste;
 I prey to God so yeve his soule reste. 30
 Fraunceys Petrark, the lauriat poete,
 Highte this clerk, whos rethorike sweete
 Enlumyned al Ytaille of poetrie,
 As Lynyan dide of philosophie,
 Or lawe, or oother art particuler. 35
 But deeth, that wol nat suffre us dwellen heer
 But as it were a twynklyng of an eye,
 Hem bothe hath slayn, and alle shul we dye.
 But forth to tellen of this worthy man,
 That taughte me this tale as I bigan, 40
 I seye, that first with heigh stile he enditeth
 Er he the body of his tale writeth,
 A prohemye in the which discryveth he
 Pemond, and of Saluces the contree,
 And speketh of Apennyn, the hilles hye, 45
 That been the boundes of Westlumbardye;
 And of Mount Vesulus in special,
 Where as the Poo out of a welle smal
 Taketh his firste spryngyng and his sours,
 That estward ay encresseth in his cours 50
 To Emeleward, to Ferrare, and Venyse;
 The which a long thyng were to devyse.
 And trewely, as to my juggement,
 Me thynketh it a thyng impertinent,
 Save that he wole convoyen his mateere; 55
 But this his tale, which that ye may heere."

31 Perak. 32 rethorik. 36 *suffre us om.*

THE CLERKES TALE

Heere bigynneth the tale of the Clerk of Oxenford.

Ther is, at the west syde of Ytaille,
Doun at the roote of Vesulus the colde,
A lusty playne, habundant of vitaille,
Where many a tour and toun thou mayst biholde 60
That founded were in tyme of fadres olde,
And many another delitable sighte,
And Saluces this noble contree highte.

A markys whilom lord was of that lond,
As were hise worthy eldres hym bifore, 65
And obeisant and redy to his hond
Were alle hise liges, bothe lasse and moore.
Thus in delit he lyveth, and hath doon yooore,
Biloved and drad thurgh favour of Fortune,
Bothe of hise lordes and of his commune. 70

Therwith he was, to speke as of lynage,
The gentilleste yborn of Lumbardye;
A fair persone, and strong, and yong of age,
And ful of honour and of curteisye,
Discreet ynogh his contree for to gye, 75
Save that in somme thynges that he was to blame,
And Walter was this yonge lordes name.

I blame hym thus, that he considereth noght
In tyme comynge what hym myghte bityde,
But in his lust present was al his thoght, 80
As for to hauke and hunte on every syde.
Wel ny alle othere cures leet he slyde;
And eek he nolde,—and that was worst of alle—
Wedde no wyf, for noght that may bifalle.

Oonly that point his peple bar so soore, 85
 That flokmeele on a day they to hym wente,
 And oon of hem, that wisest was of loore,
 Or elles that the lord best wolde assente,
 That he sholde telle hym what his peple mente,
 Or elles koude he shewe wel swich mateere, 90
 He to the markys seyde as ye shul heere:

"O noble Markys, youre humanitee
 Asseureth us, and yeveth us hardinesse,
 As ofte as tyme is of necessitee
 That we to yow mowe telle oure hevynesse. 95
 Accepteth, lord, now for youre gentillesse
 That we with pitous herte unto yow pleyne,
 And lat youre eres nat my voys desdeyne,

Al have I noght to doone in this mateere
 Moore than another man hath in this place; 100
 Yet for as muche as ye, my lord so deere,
 Han alwey shewed me favour and grace,
 I dar the bettre aske of yow a space
 Of audience to shewen oure requeste,
 And ye, my lord, to doon right as yow leste. 105

For certes, lord, so wel us liketh yow
 And al youre werk, and evere han doon that we
 Ne koude nat us-self devysen how
 We myghte lyven in moore felicitee,
 Save o thyng, lord, if it youre wille be, 110
 That for to been a wedded man yow leste,
 Thanne were youre peple in sovereyn hertes reste.

Boweth youre nekke under that blisful yok
 Of soveraynetee, noght of servyse,
 Which that men clepeth spousaille or wedlok; 115

And thenketh, lord, among youre thoghites wyse
How that oure dayes passe in sondry wyse,
For thogh we slepe, or wake, or rome, or ryde,
Ay fleeth the tyme, it nyl no man abyde.

And thogh youre grene youthe floure as yit, 120
In crepeth age alwey, as stille as stoon,
And deeth manaceth every age, and smyt
In ech estaat, for ther escapeth noon;
And al so certein as we knowe echoon
That we shul deye, as uncerteyn we alle 125
Been of that day, whan deeth shal on us falle.

Accepteth thanne of us the trewe entente
That nevere yet refuseden thyn heeste;
And we wol, lord, if that ye wole assente,
Chese yow a wyf in short tyme atte leeste, 130
Born of the gentilleste and of the meeste
Of al this land, so that it oghte seme
Honour to God and yow, as we kan deeme.

Delivere us out of al this bisy drede,
And taak a wyf for hye Goddes sake, 135
For if it so bifelle, as God forbede,
That thurgh your deeth your lync sholde slake,
And that a straunge successour sholde take
Your heritage, o wo were us alyve!
Wherfore we pray you hastily to wyve." 140

Hir meeke preyere and hir pitous cheere
Made the markys herte han pitee.
"Ye wol," quod he, "myn owene peple deere,
To that I nevere erst thoughte, streyne me.
I me rejoysed of my liberte, 145
That seelde tyme is founde in mariage.
Ther I was free, I moot been in servage.

But nathelees I se youre trewe entente,
 And truste upon youre wit, and have doon ay;
 Wherefore of my free wyl I wole assente 150
 To wedde me, as soone as evere I may.
 But ther as ye han profred me this day
 To chese me a wyf, I yow relese
 That choys, and prey yow of that profre cesse.

For God it woot, that children ofte been 155
 Unlyk hir worthy eldres hem bifore.
 Bountee comth al of God, nat of the streen,
 Of which they been engendred and ybore.
 I truste in Goddes bontee; and therfore
 My mariage, and myn estaat and reste, 160
 I hym bitake, he may doon as hym leste.

Iat me allone in chesyng of my wyf,
 That charge upon my bak I wole endure;
 But I yow preye, and charge upon youre lyf
 That what wyf that I take, ye me assure 165
 To worshipec hir, whil that hir lyf may dure,
 In word and werk, bothe heere and everywhere,
 As she an emperoures doghter weere.

And forthermoore, this shal ye swere, that ye
 Agayn my choys shul neither grucche ne stryve, 170
 For sith I shal forgoon my libertee
 At youre requeste, as evere moot I thryve,
 Ther as myn herte is set, ther wol I wyve!
 And but ye wole assente in this manere,
 I prey yow, speketh namoore of this matere." 175

With hertely wyl they sworn and assenten
 To al this thyng, ther seyde no wight nay,
 Bisekyng hym of grace er that they wenten,

That he wolde graunten hem a certein day
 Of his spousaille, as soone as evere he may, 180
 For yet alwey the peple somewhat dredde
 Lest that this markys no wyf wolde wedde.

He graunten hem a day, swich as hym leste,
 On which he wolde be wedded sikerly,
 And seyde he dide al this at hir requeste; 185
 And they with humble entente, buxomly,
 Knelynge upon hir knees ful reverently
 Hym thonken alle, and thus they han an ende
 Of hir entente, and hoom agayn they wende.

And heerupon he to hise officeres 190
 Comaundeth for the feste to purveye,
 And to hise privee knyghtes and squieres
 Swich charge yaf, as hym liste on hem leye.
 And they to his comandement obeye,
 And ech of hem dooth al his diligence 195
 To doon unto the feeste reverence.

Explicit prima pars.

Incipit secunda pars.

Noght fer fro thilke paleys honourable
 Ther as this markys shoop his mariage,
 Ther stood a throop, of site delitable,
 In which that povre folk of that village 200
 Hadden hir beestes and hir herbergage,
 And of hir labour tooke hir sustenance,
 After that the erthe yaf hem habundance.

Amonges thise povre folk ther dwelte a man
 Which that was holden povrest of hem alle; 205
 (But hye God somtyme senden kan
 His grace into a litel oxes stalle)

Janicula men of that throop hym calle.
 A doghter hadde he, fair ynogh to sighte,
 And Grisildis this yonge mayden highte. 210

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,
 Thanne was she oon the faireste under sonne,
 For povreliche yfostred up was she,
 No likerous lust was thurgh hir herte yronne.
 Wel ofter of the welle than of the tonne 215
 She drank, and for she wolde vertu plese
 She knew wel labour but noon ydel ese.

But thogh this mayde tendre were of age,
 Yet in the brest of hire virginitee
 Ther was enclosed rype and sad corage; 220
 And in greet reverence and charitee
 Hir olde povre fader fostred shee.
 A fewe sheepe, spynnyng on feeld she kepte,
 —She wolde noght been ydel, til she slepte.

And whan she homward cam, she wolde brynge 225
 Wortes, or othere herbes tymes ofte,
 The whiche she shredde and seeth for hir lyvyng,
 And made hir bed ful harde and no thyng softe;
 And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on lofte
 With everich obeisaunce and diligence 230
 That child may doon to fadres reverence.

Upon Grisilde, this povre creature,
 Ful ofte sithe this markys caste his eye,
 As he on huntyng rood paraventure.
 And whan it fil that he myghte hire espye, 235
 He noght with wantowne lookyng of folye
 Hise eyen caste on hir, but in sad wyse,
 Upon hir chiere he wolde hym ofte avyse,

Commendynge in his herte hir wommanhede
 And eek hir vertu, passynge any wight 240
 Of so yong age, as wel in chiere as dede.
 For thogh the peple hadde no greet insight
 In vertu, he considered ful right
 Hir bountee, and disposed that he wolde
 Wedde hir oonly, if evere he wedde sholde. 245

The day of weddyng cam, but no wight kan
 Telle what womman that it sholde be,
 For which merveille wondred many a man,
 And seyden, whan that they were in privetee,
 "Wol nat oure lord yet leve his vanytee? 250
 Wol he nat wedde? allas, allas, the while!
 Why wole he thus hymself and us bigile?"

But nathelees this markys hath doon make
 Of gemmes set in gold and in asure
 Brooches and rynges, for Grisildis sake, 255
 And of hir clothyng took he the mesure,
 By a mayde lyk to hir stature,
 And eek of othere ornementes alle
 That unto swich a weddyng sholde falle.

The time of undren of the same day 260
 Approacheth, that this weddyng sholde be;
 And al the paleys put was in array,
 Bothe halle and chambres, ech in his degree;
 Houses of office stuffed with plentee
 Ther maystow seen, of deyntevous vitaille, 265
 That may be founde as fer as last Ytaille.

This roial markys, richely arrayed,
 Lordes and ladyes in his compaignye,
 The whiche that to the feeste weren yprayed,

And of his retenue the bachelrye, 270
 With many a soun of sondry melodye
 Unto the village, of the which I tolde,
 In this array the righte wey han holde.

Grisilde (of this, God woot, ful innocent,
 That for hir shapen was al this array) 275
 To fecchen water at a welle is went,
 And cometh hoom as soone as ever she may;
 For wel she hadde herd seyde, that thilke day
 The markys sholde wedde, and if she myghte,
 She wolde fayn han seyn som of that sighte. 280

She thoghte, "I wole with othere maydens stonde,
 That been my felawes, in oure dore, and se
 The markysesse, and therfore wol I fonde
 To doon at hoom as soone as it may be
 The labour, which that longeth unto me, 285
 And thanne I may at lēyser hir biholde,
 If she this wey unto the castel holde."

And as she wolde over hir thressshfold gon
 The markys cam and gan hire for to calle,
 And she set down hir water pot anon 290
 Biside the thressshfold in an oxes stalle,
 And doun up-on hir knes she gan to falle,
 And with sad contenance kneleth stille,
 Til she had herd what was the lordes will.

This thoghtful markys spak unto this mayde 295
 Ful sobrelly, and seyde in this manere,
 "Where is youre fader, O Grisildis?" he sayde,
 And she with reverence in humble cheere
 Answerde, "Lord, he is al redy heere."
 And in she gooth, withouten lenger lette, 300
 And to the markys she hir fader fette.

He by the hand thanne took this olde man,
And seyde thus, whan he hym hadde asyde,
"Janicula, I neither may ne kan
Lenger the plesance of myn herte hyde; 305
If that thou vouchsauf, what so bityde,
Thy doghter wol I take, er that I wende,
As for my wyf unto hir lyves ende.

Thou lovest me, I woot it wel certeyn,
And art my feithful lige man ybore, 310
And all that liketh me, I dar wel seyn,
It liketh thee; and specially therfore
Tel me that poynt that I have seyde bifore,
If that thou wolt unto that purpos drawe,
To take me as for thy sone-in-lawe." 315

This sodeyn cas this man astonyed so,
That reed he wax abayst and al quakyng
He stood, unnethes seyde he wordes mo,
But oonly thus, "Lord," quod he, "my willynge
Is as ye wole, ne ayeyns youre likyng 320
I wol no thyng, ye be my lord so deere;
Right as yow lust governeth this mateere."

"Yet wol I," quod this markys softely,
"That in thy chambre I and thou and she
Have a collacioun, and wostow why? 325
For I wol axe, if it hir wille be
To be my wyf, and reule hir after me;
And al this shal be doon in thy presence,
I wol noght speke out of thyn audience."

And in the chambre whil they were aboute 330
Hir tretys which as ye shal after heere,
The peple cam unto the hous withoute,
And wondred hem in how honeste manere

And tentifly she kepte hir fader deere.
But outrely Grisildis wondre myghte 335
For nevere erst ne saugh she swich a sighte.

No wonder is thogh that she were astoned
To seen so greet a gest come in that place;
She nevere was to swiche gestes woned,
For which she looked with ful pale face— 340
But shortly forth this tale for to chace,
Thise arn the wordes that the markys sayde
To this benigne verray feithful mayde.

“Grisilde,” he seyde, “ye shal wel understonde
It liketh to youre fader and to me 345
That I yow wedde, and eek it may so stonde,
As, I suppose, ye wol that it so be.
But thise demandes axe I first,” quod he,
“That sith it shal be doon in hastif wyse,
Wol ye assente, or elles yow avyse?” 350

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte
To al my lust, and that I frely may,
As me best thynketh, do yow laughe or smerte,
And nevere ye to grucche it nyght ne day,
And eek whan I sey ye, ne sey nat nay, 355
Neither by word, ne frownyng contenance?
Swere this, and heere I swere yow alliance.”

Wondrynge upon this word, quakyng for drede,
She seyde, “Lord, undigne and unworthy
Am I to thilke honour, that ye me beede, 360
But as ye wole yourself, right so wol I.
And heere I swere, that nevere willyngly
In werk ne thocht I nyl yow disobeye,
For to be deed, though me were looth to deye.”

“This is ynogh, Grisilde myn,” quod he, 365
And forth he gooth with a ful sobre cheere
Out at the dore, and after that cam she;
And to the peple he seyde in this manere,
“This is my wyf,” quod he, “that standeth heere;
Honoureth hir, and loveth hir, I preye, 370
Whoso me loveth; ther is namoore to seye.”

And for that nothyng of hir olde geere
She sholde brynge into his hous, he bad
That wommen sholde dispoillen hir right theere;—
Of which thise ladyes were nat right glad 375
To handle hir clothes, wherinne she was clad—
But nathelees, this mayde bright of hewe
Fro foot to heed they clothed han al newe.

Hir heris han they kembd, that lay untressed
Ful rudely, and with hir fyngres smale 380
A corone on hir heed they han ydressed,
And sette hir ful of nowches grete and smale.
Of hir array what sholde I make a tale?
Unnethe the peple hire knew for hir fairnesse
Whan she translated was in swich richesse. 385

This markys hath hir spoused with a ryng
Brought for the same cause, and thanne hir sette
Upon an hors, snow-whit and wel amblyng,
And to his paleys, er he lenger lette, 390
With jōyful peple that hir ladde and mette
Convoyed hir; and thus the day they spende
In revel, til the sonne gan descende.

And shortly forth this tale for to chace,
I seye, that to this newe markysesse
God hath swich favour sent hir of his grace, 395
That it ne semed nat by liklynesse

That she was born and fed in rudenesse
 As in a cote or in an oxe-stalle,
 But norissed in an emperoures halle.

To every wight she woxen is so deere 400
 And worshipful, that folk ther she was bore
 And from hir birthe knewe hir yeer by yeere,
 Unnethe trowed they, but dorste han swore
 That she to Janicle, of which I spak bifore,
 She doghter nere, for as by conjecture, 405
 Hem thoughte she was another creature.

For though that evere vertuous was she,
 She was encressed in swich excellence,
 Of thewes goode, yset in heigh bountee,
 And so discreet and fair of eloquence, 410
 So benigne, and so digne of reverence,
 And koude so the peples herte embrace,
 That ech hir lovede, that looked on hir face.

Noght oonly of Saluces in the toun
 Publiced was the bountee of hir name, 415
 But eek biside in many a regioun,
 If oon seide wel, another seyde the same;
 So spradde of hir heighe bountee the fame
 That men and wommen, as wel yonge as olde,
 Goon to Saluce upon hir to biholde. 420

Thus Walter lowely, nay! but roially
 Wedded with fortunat honestetee,
 In Goddes pees lyveth ful esily
 At hoom, and outward grace ynogh had he,
 And for he saugh that under low degree 425
 Was ofte vertu hid, the peple hym heelde
 A prudent man, and that is seyn ful seelde.

Nat oonly this Grisildis thurgh hir wit
 Koude al the feet of wyfly humblenesse,
 But eek, whan that the cas required it, 430
 The commune profit koude she redresse.
 Ther nas discord, rancour, ne hevynesse
 In al that land, that she ne koude apese,
 And wisely brynge hem alle in reste and ese.

Though that hir housbonde absent were anon 435
 If gentil men, or othere of hir contree
 Were wrothe, she wolde bryngen hem aton.
 So wise and rype wordes hadde she,
 And juggementz of so greet equitee,
 That she from hevene sent was, as men wende, 440
 Peple to save and every wrong tamende.

Nat longe tyme after that this Grisild
 Was wedded, she a doghter hath ybore—
 Al had hir levere have born a man child;
 Glad was this markys and the folk therfore, 445
 For though a mayde child coome al bifore,
 She may unto a knave child atteyne
 By liklihede, syn she nys nat bareyne.

Explicit secunda pars.

Incipit tercia pars.

Ther fil, as it bifalleth tymes mo,
 Whan that this child had souked but a throwe, 450
 This markys in his herte longeth so
 To tempte his wyf, hir sadnesse for to knowe,
 That he ne myghte out of his herte throwe
 This merveillous desir his wyf tassaye.
 Nedeles, God woot, he thoghte hir for taffraye. 455

He hadde assayed hir ynogh bifore,
 And foond hir evere good; what neded it

Hir for to tempte and alwey moore and moore?
Though som men preise it for a subtil wit,
But as for me, I seye that yvele it sit 460
To assaye a wyf, whan that it is no nede,
And putten hir in angwyssh and in drede.

For which this markys wroghte in this manere;
He cam allone a nyght, ther as she lay,
With stierne face and with ful trouble cheere, 465
And seyde thus, "Grisilde," quod he, "that day
That I yow took out of your povere array,
And putte yow in estaat of heigh noblesse,
Ye have nat that forgeten, as I gesse.

I seye, Grisilde, this present dignitee 470
In which that I have put yow, as I trowe
Maketh yow nat foryetful for to be
That I yow took in povre estaat ful lowe
For any wele ye moot youreselven knowe.
Taak heede of every word that y yow seye, 475
Ther is no wight that hereth it but we tweye.

Ye woot yourself wel how that ye cam heere
Into this hous, it is nat longe ago.
And though to me that ye be lief and deere,
Unto my gentils ye be no thyng so. 480
They seyn, to hem it is greet shame and wo
For to be subgetz, and to been in servage,
To thee that born art of a smal village.

And namely, sith thy doghter was ybore,
Thise wordes han they spoken, doutelees; 485
But I desire, as I have doon bifore,
To lyve my lyf with hem in reste and pees.
I may nat in this caas be recchelees,
I moot doon with thy doghter for the beste,
Nat as I wolde, but as my peple leste. 490

And yet God woot, this is ful looth to me!
But nathelees, withoute youre wityng
I wol nat doon, but this wol I," quod he,
"That ye to me assente as in this thyng.
Shewe now youre pacience in youre werkyng, 495
That ye me highte and swore in youre village,
That day that maked was oure mariage."

Whan she had herd al this, she noght ameved
Neither in word, or chiere, or countenaunce;
For as it semed she was nat agreved. 500
She seyde, "Lord, al lyth in youre plesaunce,
My child, and I, with hertely obeisaunce
Been youre al, and ye mowe save and spille
Your owene thyng, werketh after youre wille.

Ther may no thyng, God so my soule save, 505
Likened to yow, that may displese me,
Ne I ne desire no thyng for to have,
Ne drede for to leese save oonly yee;
This wyl is in myn herte, and ay shal be;
No lengthe of tyme or deeth may this deface, 510
Ne chaunge my corage to another place."

Glad was this markys of hir answeyng,
But yet he feyned as he were nat so.
Al drery was his cheere and his lookyng,
Whan that he sholde out of the chambre go. 515
Soone after this, a furlong wey or two,
He prively hath toold al his entente
Unto a man, and to his wyf hym sente.

A maner sergeant was this privee man,
The which that feithful ofte he founden hadde 520
In thynges grete, and eek swich folk wel kan
Doon execucioun on thynges badde.

The lord knew wel that he hym loved and dradde;—
 And whan this sergeant wiste the lordes wille,
 Into the chambre he stalked hym ful stille. 525

“Madame,” he seyde, “ye moote foryeve it me
 Though I do thyng to which I am constreyned,
 Ye been so wys, that ful wel knowe ye
 That lordes heestes mowe nat been yfeyned,
 They mowe wel been biwailed and compleyned, 530
 But men moote nede unto hir lust obeye;
 And so wol I, ther is namoore to seye.

This child I am comanded for to take.”
 And spak namoore, but out the child he hente
 Despitously, and gan a cheere make 535
 As though he wolde han slayn it er he wente.
 Grisildis moot al suffren and consente,
 And as a lamb she sitteth meke and stille,
 And leet this crueel sergeant doon his wille.

Suspecious was the diffame of this man, 540
 Suspect his face, suspect his word also,
 Suspect the tyme in which he this bigan.
 Allas, hir doghter that she loved so!
 She wende he wolde han slawen it right tho;
 But nathelees she neither weep ne syked, 545
 Consentynge hir to that the markys lyked.

But atte laste speken she bigan,
 And mekely she to the sergeant preyde,
 So as he was a worthy gentil man,
 That she moste kisse hire child, er that it deyde, 550
 And in hir barm this litel child she leyde,
 With ful sad face, and gan the child to kisse,
 And lulled it, and after gan it blisse.

And thus she seyde in hir benigne voys,
 "Fareweel, my child, I shal thee nevere see,
 But sith I thee have marked with the croys 555
 Of thilke fader blessed moote thou be,
 That for us deyde upon a croys of tree.
 Thy soule, litel child, I hym bitake,
 For this nyght shaltow dyen for my sake." 560

I trowe, that to a norice in this cas
 It had been hard this reuthe for to se;
 Wel myghte a mooder thanne han cryd 'allas!
 But nathelees so sad and stidefast was she,
 That she endured al adversitee, 565
 And to the sergeant mekely she sayde,
 "Have heer agayn your litel yonge mayde."

"Gooth now," quod she, "and dooth my lordes heeste;
 But o thyng wol I prey yow of youre grace,
 That, but my lord forbad yow atte leeste, 570
 Burieth this litel body in som place
 That beestes ne no briddes it torace."
 But he no word wol to that purpos seye,
 But took the child, and wente upon his weye.

This sergeant cam unto his lord ageyn, 575
 And of Grisildis wordes and hir cheere
 He tolde hym point for point, in short and pleyn,
 And hym presenteth with his doghter deere.
 Somwhat this lord hath routhe in his manere,
 But nathelees his purpos heeld he stille, 580
 As lordes doon whan they wol han hir wille;

And bad his sergeant, that he pryvely
 Sholde this child ful softe wynde and wrappe,
 With alle circumstances tendrely,

And carie it in a cofre or in a lappe, 585
 But upon peyne his heed of for to swappe
 That no man sholde knowe of his entente,
 Ne whenne he cam, ne whider that he wente.

But at Boloigne to his suster deere,
 That thilke tyme of Panik was Countesse, 590
 He sholde it take, and shewe hir this mateere,
 Bisekynge hir to doon hir bisynesse
 This child to fostre in alle gentillesse,
 And whos child that it was, he bad hire hyde
 From every wight, for oght that may bityde. 595

The sergeant gooth, and hath fulfild this thyng,
 But to this markys now retourne we,
 For now gooth he ful faste ymaginyng,
 If by his wyves cheere he myghte se
 Or by hir word aperceyve that she 600
 Were chaunged, but he nevere hir koude fynde,
 But evere in oon ylike sad and kynde.

As glad, as humble, as bisy in servyse,
 And eek in love, as she was wont to be,
 Was she to hym in every maner wyse, 605
 Ne of hir doghter noght a word spak she.
 Noon accident for noon adversitee
 Was seyn in hir, ne nevere hir doghter name
 Ne nempned she, in ernest nor in game.

Explicit tercia pars.

Sequitur pars quarta.

In this estaat ther passed been foure yeer 610
 Er she with childe was; but as God wolde,
 A knave child she bar by this Walter,

Ful gracious and fair for to biholde.
 And whan that folk it to his fader tolde,
 Nat oonly he, but al his contree, merye 615
 Was for this child, and God they thanke and herye.

Whan it was two yeer old, and fro the brest
 Departed of his norice, on a day
 This markys caughte yet another lest 620
 To tempte his wyf yet after if he may.
 O, nedelee was she tempted in assay!
 But wedded men ne knowe no mesure,
 Whan that they fynde a pacient creature.

“Wyf,” quod this markys, “ye han herd er this
 My peple sikly berth oure mariage; 625
 And namely sith my sone yboren is,
 Now is it worse than evere in al oure age.
 The murmure sleeth myn herte and my corage,
 For to myne eres comth the voys so smerte,
 That it wel ny destroyed hath myn herte. 630

Now sey they thus, ‘whan Walter is agon,
 Thanne shal the blood of Janicle succede,
 And been oure lord, for oother have we noon.’
 Swiche wordes seith my peple, out of drede,
 Wel oughte I of swich murmur taken heede, 635
 For certainly I drede swich sentence,
 Though they nat pleyn speke in myn audience.

I wolde lyve in pees, if that I myghte;
 Wherefore I am disposed outrelly
 As I his suster servede by nyghte, 640
 Right so thenke I to serve hym pryvely.
 This warne I yow, that ye nat sodeynly
 Out of youreself for no wo sholde outreye.
 Beth pacient, and therof I yow preye.”

"I have," quod she, "seyd thus, and evere shal, 645
 I wol no thyng, ne nyl no thyng, certayn,
 But as yow list, naught greveth me at al
 Though that my doughter and my sone be slayn—
 At youre comandement, this is to sayn—
 I have noght had no part of children tweyne 650
 But first siknesse, and after wo and peyne.

Ye been oure lord, dooth with your owene thyng
 Right as yow list, axeth no reed at me;
 For as I lefte at hoom al my clothyng,
 Whan I first cam to yow, right so," quod she, 655
 "Lefte I my wyl and al my libertee,
 And took youre clothyng, wherfore I yow preye,
 Dooth youre plesaunce; I wol youre lust obeye.

And certes, if I hadde prescience
 Your wyl to knowe, er ye youre lust me tolde, 660
 I wolde it doon withouten necligence.
 But now I woot your lust and what ye wolde,
 Al your plesance ferme and stable I holde,
 For wiste I that my deeth wolde do yow ese,
 Right gladly wolde I dyen yow to plese. 665

Deth may noght make no comparisoun
 Unto youre love!" and whan this markys say^v
 The constance of his wyf, he caste adoun
 Hise eyen two, and wondreth that she may
 In pacience suffre al this array; 670
 And forth he goth with drery contenance,
 But to his herte it was ful greet plesance.

This ugly sergeant, in the same wyse
 That he hir doghter caughte, right so he
 Or worse, if men worse kan devyse, 675
 Hath hent hir sone, that ful was of beautee,

And evere in oon so pacient was she,
That she no chiere maade of hevynesse,
But kiste hir sone, and after gan it blesse.

Save this, she preyde hym, that if he myghte, 680
Hir litel sone he wolde in erthe grave
His tendre lymes, delicaat to sighte,
Fro foweles and fro beestes for to save.
But she noon answeere of hym myghte have,
He wente his wey, as hym nothyng ne roghte, 685
But to Boloigne he tendrely it broghte.

This markys wondred evere lenger the moore
Upon hir pacience, and if that he
Ne hadde soothly knowen therbifoore
That parfitly hir children loved she, 690
He wolde have wend that of som subtiltee,
And of malice, or for crueel corage,
That she hadde suffred this with sad visage.

But wel he knew that next hymself, certayn,
She loved hir children best in every wyse; 695
But now of wommen wolde I axen fayn,
If thise assayes myghte nat suffise,
What koude a sturdy housbonde moore devyse
To preeve hire wyfhod or hir stedefastnesse,
And he continuyng evere in sturdinesse? 700

But ther been folk of swich condicioun,
That whan they have a certein purpos take
They kan nat stynte of hir entencioun,
But right as they were bounden to that stake
They wol nat of that firste purpos slake. 705
Right so this markys fullliche hath purposed
To tempte his wyf, as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by word or contenance
 That she to hym was changed of corage;
 But nevere koude he fynde variance, 710
 She was ay oon in herte and in visage.
 And ay the forther that she was in age,
 The moore trewe—if that it were possible—
 She was to hym in love, and moore penyble.

For which it semed thus, that of hem two 715
 Ther nas but o wyl; for, as Walter leste,
 The same lust was hir plesance also,
 And, God be thanked, al fil for the beste.
 She shewed wel, for no worldly unreste
 A wyf as of himself no thing ne sholde 720
 Wille in effect, but as hir housbonde wolde.

The sclaunder of Walter ofte and wyde spradde,
 That of a crueel herte he wikkedly,
 For he a povre womman wedded hadde,
 Hath mordred bothe his children prively.— 725
 Swich murmure was among hem comunly;
 No wonder is, for to the peples ere
 Ther cam no word, but that they mordred were.

For which, wher as his peple therbifore
 Hadde loved hym wel, the sclaunder of his diffame 730
 Made hem, that they hym hatede therefore.
 To been a mordrere is an hateful name;
 But nathelees, for earnest ne for game
 He of his crueel purpos nolde stente:
 To tempte his wyf was set al his entente. 735

Whan that his doghter twelf yeer was of age,
 He to the court of Rome in subtil wyse
 Enformed of his wyl sente his message,

Comaundyng hem swiche bulles to devyse
 As to his crueel purpos may suffyse, 740
 How that the pope as for his peples reste
 Bad hym to wedde another, if hym leste.

I seye, he bad they sholde countrefete
 The popes bulles, makynge mencion
 That he hath leve his firste wyf to lete 745
 As by the popes dispensacioun,
 To stynte rancour and dissencioun
 Bitwixe his peple and hym, thus seyde the bulle,
 The which they han publiced atte fulle.

The rude peple, as it no wonder is, 750
 Wenden ful wel that it hadde be right so;
 But whan thise tidynges cam to Grisildis,
 I deeme that hir herte was ful wo.
 But she, ylike sad for everemo,
 Disposed was, this humble creature, 755
 The adversitee of Fortune al tendure,

Abidyng evere his lust and his plesance
 To whom that she was yeven, herte and al,
 As to hir verray worldly suffisance.
 But shortly, if this storie I tellen shal, 760
 This markys writen hath in special
 A lettre, in which he sheweth his entente,
 And secreely he to Boloigne it sente;

To the Erl of Panyk, which that hadde tho
 Wedded his suster, preyde he specially 765
 To bryngen hoom agayn hise children two,
 In honourable estaat al openly;
 But o thyng he hym preyde outrely,
 That he to no wight, though men wolde enquire,
 Sholde nat telle whos children that they were, 770

But seye, the mayden sholde ywedded be
 Unto the Markys of Saluce anon.
 And as this Erl was preyed, so dide he;
 For at day set he on his wey is goon
 Toward Saluce, and lordes many oon, 775
 In riche array this mayden for to gyde,
 Hir yonge brother ridynge hir bisyde.

Arrayed was toward hir mariage
 This fresshe mayde, ful of gemmes cleere;
 Hir brother, which that seven yeer was of age, 780
 Arrayed eek ful fressh in his manere.
 And thus in greet noblesse, and with glad cheere,
 Toward Saluces shapyng hir journey,
 Fro day to day they ryden in hir wey.

Explicit quarta pars.

Sequitur pars quinta.

Among al this, after his wikke usage, 785
 This markys yet his wyf to tempte moore
 To the outtreste preeve of hir corage,
 Fully to han experience and loore,
 If that she were as stidefast as bifoore,
 He on a day in open audience 790
 Ful boistously hath seyde hir this sentence.

“Certes, Grisilde, I hadde ynogh plesance,
 To han yow to my wyf for your goodnesse,
 As for youre trouthe, and for your obeisance—
 Noght for youre lynage, ne for youre richesse; 795
 But now knowe I, in verray soothfastnesse,
 That in greet lordshipe, if I wel avyse,
 Ther is greet servitude in sondry wyse.

I may nat doon as every plowman may;
My peple me constreyneth for to take 800
Another wyf, and crien day by day,
And eek the pope, rancour for to slake,
Consenteth it, that dar I undertake—
And treweliche thus muche I wol yow seye,
My newe wyf is comynge by the weye. 805

Be strong of herte, and voyde anon hir place,
And thilke dower that ye broghten me
Taak it agayn, I graunte it of my grace.
Retourneth to youre fadres hous," quod he;
"No man may alwey han prosperitee. 810
With evene herte I rede yow tendure
This strook of Fortune or of aventure."

And she answerde agayn in pacience,
"My lord," quod she, "I woot and wiste alway
How that bitwixen youre magnificence 815
And my poverte, no wight kan ne may
Maken comparisoun, it is no nay.
I ne heeld me nevere digne in no manere
To be your wyf, no, ne youre chamberere.

And in this hous ther ye me lady maade, 820
The heighe God take I for my witnesse,
And also wysly he my soule glaade,
I nevere heeld me lady ne maistresse,
But humble servant to youre worthynesse,
And evere shal whil that my lyf may dure 825
Aboven every worldly creature.

That ye so longe of youre benignitee
Han holden me in honour and nobleye,
Wher as I was noght worthy for to bee,

That thonke I God and yow, to whom I preye 830
 Foryelde it yow; ther is namoore to seye.
 Unto my fader gladly wol I wende,
 And with hym dwelle unto my lyves ende.

Ther I was fostred of a child ful smal,
 Til I be deed, my lyf ther wol I lede, 835
 A wydwe clene in body, herte, and al,
 For sith I yaf to yow my maydenhede
 And am youre trewe wyf, it is no drede,
 God shilde swich a lordes wyf to take
 Another man, to housbonde or to make. 840

And of youre newe wyf, God of his grace
 So graunte yow wele and prosperitee,
 For I wol gladly yelden hir my place
 In which that I was blisful wont to bee.
 For sith it liketh yow my lord," quod shee, 845
 "That whilom weren al myn hertes reste,
 That I shal goon, I wol goon whan yow leste.

But ther as ye me profre swich dowaire
 As I first broghte, it is wel in my mynde
 It were my wrecched clothes, no thyng faire, 850
 The whiche to me were hard now for to fynde.
 O goode God! how gentil and how kynde
 Ye semed by youre speche and youre visage
 The day that maked was oure mariage!

But sooth is seyde, algate I fynde it trewe, 855
 (For in effect it preeved is on me)
 Love is noght oold, as whan that it is newe,
 But certes, lord, for noon adversitee,
 To dyen in the cas it shal nat bee
 That evere in word or werk I shal repente 860
 That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente.

My lord, ye woot that in my fadres place
Ye dide me streepe out of my povre weede,
And richely me cladden of youre grace.
To yow broghte I noght elles, out of drede, 865
But feith, and nakednesse, and maydenhede.
And heere agayn my clothyng I restoore,
And eek my weddyng ryng for everemo.

The remenant of youre jueles redy be
In-with youre chambre, dar I saufly sayn. 870
Naked out of my fadres hous," quod she,
"I cam, and naked moot I turne agayn.
Al your plesance wol I folwen fayn,
But yet I hope it be nat your entente
That I smoklees out of your paleys wente. 875

Ye koude nat doon so dishoneste a thyng,
That thilke wombe in which your children leye,
Sholde biforn the peple in my walkyng
Be seyn al bare; wherfore I yow preye,
Lat me nat lyk a worm go by the weye! 880
Remembre yow, myn owene lord so deere,
I was your wyf, though I unworthy weere.

Wherfore, in gerdoun of my maydenhede
Which that I broghte, and noght agayn I bere,
As voucheth sauf to yeve me to my meede 885
But swich a smok as I was wont to were,
That I therwith may wrye the wombe of here
That was your wyf, and heer take I my leeve
Of yow, myn owene lord, lest I yow greve."

"The smok," quod he, "that thou hast on thy bak, 890
Lat it be stille, and bere it forth with thee."
But wel unnethes thilke word he spak;
But wente his wey for routhe and for pitee.

Biforn the folk hirselves strepeth she,
 And in hir smok, with heed and foot al bare, 895
 Toward hir fader hous forth is she fare.

The folk hir folwe, wepynge in hir weye,
 And Fortune ay they cursen, as they goon.
 But she fro wepyng kepte hir eyen dreye,
 Ne in this tyme word ne spak she noon. 900
 Hir fader, that this tidynge herde anon,
 Curseth the day and tyme that nature
 Shoop hym to been a lyves creature.

For out of doute this olde povre man
 Was evere in suspect of hir mariage, 905
 For evere he demed, sith that it bigan,
 That whan the lord fulfild hadde his corage,
 Hym wolde thynke it were a disparage
 To his estaat, so lowe for talighte,
 And voyden hir as soone as ever he myghte. 910

Agayns his doghter hastiliche goth he,
 For he by noyse of folk knew hir comynge,
 And with hir olde coote, as it myghte be,
 He covered hir, ful sorwefully wepynge,
 But on hir body myghte he it nat brynge. 915
 For rude was the clooth, and moore of age
 By dayes fele, than at hir mariage.

Thus with hir fader for a certeyn space
 Dwelleth this flour of wyfly pacience,
 That neither by hir wordes ne hir face, 920
 Biforn the folk ne eek in hir absence,
 Ne shewed she that hir was doon offence,
 Ne of hir heighe estaat no remembraunce
 Ne hadde she, as by hir contenaunce.

No wonder is, for in hir grete estaat 925
 Hir goost was evere in pleyn humylitee.
 No tendre mouth, noon herte delicaat,
 No pompe, no semblant of roialtee,
 But ful of pacient benyngnytee,
 Discreet and pridelees, ay honorable, 930
 And to hir housbonde evere meke and stable.

Men speke of Job, and moost for his humblesse,
 As clerkes whan hem list konne wel endite,
 Namely of men; but as in soothfastnesse,
 Though clerkes preise wommen but a lite, 935
 Ther kan no man in humblesse hym acquite,
 As womman kan, ne kan been half so trewe
 As wommen been, but it be falle of newe.

[*Pars sexta.*]

Fro Boloigne is this Erl of Panyk come,
 Of which the fame up sprang to moore and lesse, 940
 And in the peples eres, alle and some,
 Was kouth eek that a newe markysesse
 He with hym broghte, in swich pompe and richesse,
 That nevere was ther seyn with mannes eye
 So noble array in al Westlumbardye. 945

The markys, which that shoop and knew al this,
 Er that thise Erl was come, sente his message
 For thilke sely povre Grisildis;
 And she with humble herte and glad visage,
 Nat with no swollen thoght in hire corage 950
 Cam at his heste, and on hir knees hire sette,
 And reverently and wisely she hym grette.

"Grisilde," quod he, "my wyl is outrely
 This mayden, that shal wedded been to me,
 Received be to morwe as roially 955
 As it possible is in myn hous to be;
 And eek that every wight in his degree
 Have his estaat in sitting and servyse
 And heigh plesaunce, as I kan best devyse.

I have no wommen, suffisaunt, certayn, 960
 The chambres for tarraye in ordinaunce
 After my lust, and therfore wolde I fayn
 That thyn were al swich manere governaunce;
 Thou knowest eek of old al my plesaunce,
 Thogh thyn array be badde and yvel biseye, 965
 Do thou thy devoir at the leeste weye."

"Nat oonly lord, that I am glad," quod she,
 "To doon your lust, but I desire also
 Yow for to serve and plese in my degree
 Withouten feynting, and shal everemo. 970
 Ne nevere, for no wele ne no wo,
 Ne shal the goost withinne myn herte stente
 To love yow best with al my trewe entente."

And with that word she gan the hous to dighte,
 And tables for to sette, and beddes make, 975
 And peyned hir to doon al that she myghte,
 Preyynge the chambereres for Goddes sake
 To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake,
 And she, the mooste servysable of alle,
 Hath every chambre arrayed, and his halle. 980

Abouten undren gan this Erl alighte,
 That with hym broghte thise noble children tweye,
 For which the peple ran to seen the sighte
 Of hir array, so richely biseye;

And thanne at erst amonges hem they seye,
 That Walter was no fool, thogh that hym leste
 To chaunge his wyf, for it was for the beste. 985

“For she is fairer,” as they deemen alle,
 “Than is Grisilde, and moore tendre of age,
 And fairer fruyt bitwene hem sholde falle, 990
 And moore plesant for hir heigh lynage.”
 Hir brother eek so faire was of visage,
 That hem to seen the peple hath caught plesaunce,
 Commendynge now the markys governaunce.

O stormy peple, unsad and evere untrewel
 Ay undiscreet and chaungynge as a vane,
 Delitynge evere in rumbul that is newe;
 For lyk the moone ay wexe ye and wane,
 Ay ful of clappyng, deere ynogh a jane,
 Youre doom is fals, youre constance yvele preeveth, 1000
 A ful greet fool is he that on yow leeveth!

Thus seyden sadde folk in that citee,
 Whan that the peple gazed up and doun,
 For they were glad right for the noveltee
 To han a newe lady of hir toun. 1005
 Namooore of this make I now menciouun,
 But to Grisilde agayn wol I me dresse,
 And telle hir constance and hir bisynesse.

Ful bisy was Grisilde in every thyng
 That to the feeste was apertinent. 1010
 Right noght was she abayst of hir clothyng,
 Thogh it were rude and somdeel eek torent,
 But with glad cheere to the yate is went
 With oother folk to greete the markysesse,
 And after that dooth forth hir bisynesse. 1015

With so glad chiere hise gestes she receyveth,
 And konnyngly everich in his degree,
 That no defaute no man aperceyveth,
 But ay they wondren what she myghte bee
 That in so povre array was for to see, 1020
 And koude swich honour and reverence;
 And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

In al this meenewhile she ne stente
 This mayde and eek hir brother to commende
 With al hir herte, in ful benyngne entente, 1025
 So wel that no man koude hir pris amende,
 But atte laste, whan that thise lordes wende
 To sitten down to mete, he gan to calle
 Grisilde, as she was bisy in his halle.

"Grisilde," quod he, as it were in his pley, 1030
 "How liketh thee my wyf and hir beautee?"
 "Right wel," quod she, "my lord, for in good fey
 A fairer saugh I nevere noon than she.
 I prey to God yeve hir prosperitee,
 And so hope I that he wol to yow sende 1035
 Plesance ynogh unto youre lyves ende.

O thyng biseke I yow, and warne also
 That ye ne prikke with no tormentynge
 This tendre mayden, as ye han doon mo;
 For she is fostred in hir norissynge 1040
 Moore tendrely, and to my supposynge
 She koude nat adversitee endure,
 As koude a povre fostred creature."

And whan this Walter saugh hir pacience,
 Hir glade chiere, and no malice at al, 1045
 And he so ofte had doon to hir offence

And she ay sad and constant as a wal,
 Continuyng evere hir innocence overal,
 This sturdy markys gan his herte dresse
 To rewen upon hir wyfly stedfastnesse. 1050

"This is ynogh, Grisilde myn," quod he,
 "Be now namoore agast, ne yvele apayed.
 I have thy feith and thy benyngnytee
 As wel as evere womman was, assayed
 In greet estaat, and povreliche arrayed; 1055
 Now knowe I, goode wyf, thy stedfastnesse!"
 And hir in armes took, and gan hir kesse.

And she for wonder took of it no keep.
 She herde nat, what thyng he to hir seyde.
 She ferde as she had stert out of a sleep, 1060
 Til she out of hire mazednesse abreyde.
 "Grisilde," quod he, "by God that for us deyde,
 Thou art my wyf, ne noon oother I have,
 Ne nevere hadde, as God my soule save.

This is thy doghter which thou hast supposed 1065
 To be my wyf; that oother feithfully
 Shal be myn heir, as I have ay purposed;
 Thou bare hym in thy body trewely.
 At Boloigne have I kept hem prively.
 Taak hem agayn, for now maystow nat seye 1070
 That thou hast lorn noon of thy children tweye.

And folk that ootherweys han seyde of me,
 I warne hem wel that I have doon this deede
 For no malice, ne for no crueltee,
 But for tassaye in thee thy wommanheede, 1075
 And not to sleen my children, God forbeede!
 But for to kepe hem pryvely and stille,
 Til I thy purpos knewe and al thy wille."

Whan she this herde, aswowne doun she falleth
 For pitous joye, and after hir swownynge 1080
 She bothe hir yonge children unto hir calleth,
 And in hir armes pitously wepynge
 Embraceth hem, and tendrely kissynge
 Ful lyk a mooder, with hir salte teeres
 She bathed bothe hir visage and hir heeres. 1085

O, which a pitous thyng it was to se
 Hir swownyng, and hir humble voys to heere!
 "Grauntmercy, lord, that thanke I yow," quod she,
 "That ye han saved me my children deere.
 Now rekke I nevere to been deed right heere. 1090
 Sith I stonde in your love and in your grace,
 No fors of deeth, ne whan my spirit pace!

O tendre, O deere, O yonge children myne!
 Your woful mooder wende stedfastly
 That crueel houndes, or som foul vermyne 1095
 Hadde eten yow; but God of his mercy
 And youre benyngne fader tendrely
 Hath doon yow kept," and in that same stounde
 Al sodeynly she swapte adoun to grounde.

And in hir swough so sadly holdeth she 1100
 Hir children two, whan she gan hem tembrace,
 That with greet sleighte and greet difficultee
 The children from hir arm they gonne arace.
 O many a teere on many a pitous face
 Doun ran, of hem that stooden hir bisyde; 1105
 Unnethe abouten hir myghte they abyde.

Walter hir gladeth, and hir sorwe slaketh,
 She riseth up abaysed from hir traunce,
 And every wight hir joye and feeste maketh,
 Til she hath caught agayn hir contenance. 1110

Walter hir dooth so feithfully plesaunce,
That it was deyntee for to seen the cheere
Bitwixe hem two, now they been met yfeere.

Thise ladyes, whan that they hir tyme say,
Han taken hir and into chambre gon, 1115
And strepen hir out of hir rude array
And in a clooth of gold that brighte shoon,
With a coroune of many a riche stoon
Upon hir heed, they into halle hir broghte,
And ther she was honoured as hir oghte. 1120

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende,
For every man and womman dooth his myght
This day in murthe and revel to dispende,
Til on the welkne shoon the sterres lyght.
For moore solempne in every mannes syght 1125
This feste was, and gretter of costage,
Than was the revel of hire mariage.

Ful many a yeer in heigh prosperitee
Lyven thise two in concord and in reste.
And richely his doghter maryed he 1130
Unto a lord, oon of the worthieste
Of al Ytaille, and thanne in pees and reste
His wyves fader in his court he kepeth,
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage 1135
In reste and pees, after his fader day,
And fortunat was eek in mariage—
Al putte he nat his wyf in greet assay;
This world is nat so strong, it is no nay,
As it hath been of olde tymes yoore. 1140
And herkneth what this auctour seith therfoore.

This storie is seyde, nat for that wyves sholde
 Folwen Grisilde as in humylitee,
 For it were inportable though they wolde,
 But for that every wight in his degree 1145
 Sholde be constant in adversitee
 As was Grisilde. Therfore Petrark writeth
 This storie, which with heigh stile he enditeth.

For sith a womman was so pacient
 Unto a mortal man, wel moore us oghte 1150
 Receyven al in gree that God us sent.
 For greet skile is, he preeve that he wroghte.
 But he ne tempteth no man that he boghte,
 As seith Seint Jame, if ye his pistel rede;
 He preeveth folk al day, it is no drede, 1155

And suffreth us, as for oure excercise,
 With sharpe scourges of adversitee
 Ful ofte to be bete in sondry wise,
 Nat for to knowe oure wyl, for certes he
 Er we were born knew al oure freletee, 1160
 And for oure beste is al his governaunce.
 Lat us thanne lyve in vertuous suffraunce.

But o word, lordynges, herkneth er I go,
 It were ful hard to fynde nowadayes
 In al a toun Grisildis thre or two, 1165
 For if that they were put to swiche assayes,
 The gold of hem hath now so badde alayes
 With bras, that thogh the coyne be fair at eye,
 It wolde rather breste atwo than plye.

For which, heere for the Wyves love of Bathe, 1170
 Whos lyf and al hir secte God mayntene
 In heigh maistrie, and elles were it scathe,

I wol with lusty herte fressh and grene
Seyn yow a song, to glade yow, I wene,
And lat us stynte of earnestful matere. 1175
Herkneth my song, that seith in this manere.

Lenvoy de Chaucer.

Grisilde is deed, and eek hir pacience,
And bothe atones buryed in Ytaille,
For which I crie in open audience
No wedded man so hardy be tassaille 1180
His wyves pacience, in hope to fynde
Grisildis, for in certain he shal faille.

O noble wyves, ful of heigh prudence,
Lat noon humylitee youre tonge naille,
Ne lat no clerk have cause or diligence 1185
To write of yow a storie of swich mervaille
As of Grisildis, pacient and kynde,
Lest Chichivache yow swelwe in hire entraille.

Folweth Ekko, that holdeth no silence,
But evere answereth at the countretaille; 1190
Beth nat bidaffed for youre innocence,
But sharply taak on yow the governaille.
Emprenteth wel this lessoun in youre mynde
For commune profit, sith it may availle.

Ye archiwyves, stondeth at defense, 1195
Syn ye be strong as is a greet camaille.
Ne suffreth nat that men yow doon offense,
And sklendre wyves, fieble as in bataille,
Beth egre as is a tygre yond in Ynde,
Ay clappeth as a mille, I yow consaille. 1200

Ne dreed hem nat, doth hem no reverence,
 For though thyn housbonde armed be in maille,
 The arwes of thy crabbed eloquence
 Shal perce his brest and eek his aventaille.
 In jalousie I rede eek thou hym bynde, 1205
 And thou shalt make hym couche as doth a quaille.

If thou be fair, ther folk been in presence
 Shewe thou thy visage and thyn apparaille;
 If thou be foul, be fre of thy dispence,
 To gete thee freendes ay do thy travaille, 1210
 Be ay of chiere as light as leef on lynde,
 And lat hym care, and wepe, and wryng, and waille.

Here endeth the Clerk of Oxenford his Tale.

Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost.

This worthy clerk, whan ended was his tale,
 Oure hoost seyde, and swoor by goddes bones,
 "Me were levere than a barel ale
 My wyf at hoom had herd this legende ones;
 This is a gentil tale for the nones, 5
 As to my purpos, wiste ye my wille,—
 But thyng that wol nat be, lat it be stille."

Heere endeth the tale of the Clerk of Oxenford.

[This stanza, perhaps made up by a scribe from other lines in Chaucer, is inserted in Ellesmere MS. and elsewhere as a link between the Clerk's Tale and the Envoy, ascribed to Chaucer. The Envoy, however, belongs to the Clerk, and the stanza seems both spurious and unnecessary.]

THE PROLOGUE OF THE MARCHANTES TALE

The Prologe of the Marchantes tale.

“Wepying and waylyng, care and oother sorwe,
I knowe ynogh, on even and a morwe,”
Quod the Marchant, “and so doon othere mo 1215
That wedded been, I trowe that it be so.
For wel I woot, it fareth so with me.
I have a wyf, the worste that may be,
For thogh the feend to hire ycoupled were,
She wolde hym overmacche, I dar wel swere. 1220
What sholde I yow reherce in special
Hir hye malice? She is a shrewe at al!
Ther is a long and large difference
Bitwix Grisildis grete pacience
And of my wyf the passyng crueltee. 1225
Were I unbounden, al so moot I thee,
I wolde nevere eft comen in the snare.
We wedded men lyve in sorwe and care;
Assaye who so wole, and he shal fynde
I seye sooth, by seint Thomas of Ynde— 1230
As for the moore part, I sey nat alle;
God shilde, that it sholde so bifalle!
A, goode Sir Hoost, I have ywedded bee
Thise monthes two, and moore nat, pardee;
And yet I trowe, he that al his lyve 1235
Wyffles hath been, though that men wolde him ryve
Unto the herte, ne koude in no manere
Tellen so muchel sorwe as I now heere
Koude tellen of my wyves cursednesse!”
Now quod our hoost, “Marchant, so God yow blesse, 1240

Syn ye so muchel knowen of that art,
Ful hertely I pray yow telle us part."
"Gladly," quod he, "but of myn owene soore,
For soory herte I telle may namoore."

THE TALE.

[January, a rich old dotard, who has married May, in spite of his friends' objections to the inequality of their ages, is deceived by her and his young squire Damian, although Pluto in pity restores his lost sight.]

EPILOGUE

The Prologe of the Squieres tale.

“Ey, Goddes mercy!” seyde oure Hooste tho,
“Now swich a wyf I pray God kepe me fro! 2420
Lo, whiche sleightes and subtilitees
In wommen been, for ay as bisy as bees
Been they us sely men for to deceyve;
And from a sooth evere wol they weyve,
By this Marchauntes tale it preveth weel. 2425
But doutelees, as trewe as any steel,
I have a wyf, though that she povre be,
But of hir tonge a labbyng shrewe is she.
And yet she hath an heep of vices mo—
Ther-of no fors, lat alle swiche thynges go. 2430
But wyte ye what, in conseil be it seyde,
Me reweth soore I am unto hire teyd;
For and I sholde rekenen every vice,
Which that she hath, ywis, I were to nyce.
And cause why? it sholde reported be, 2435
And toold to hir of somme of this meynce;
Of whom, it nedeth nat for to declare,
Syn wommen konnen outhen swich chaffare.
And eek my wit suffiseth nat therto,
To tellen al, wherfore my tale is do.” 2440

GROUP F.

PROLOGUE TO THE SQUIERES TALE

Squier, come neer, if it your wille be,
And sey somewhat of love, for certes, ye
Konnen theron as muche as any man."
"Nay sir," quod he, "but I wol seye as I kan,
With hertly wyl, for I wol nat rebelle
Agayn your lust. A tale wol I telle,
Have me excused if I speke amys;
My wyl is good, and lo, my tale is this."

THE SQUIERES TALE

Heere bigynneth the Squieres Tale.

At Sarray, in the land of Tartarye,
Ther dwelte a kyng, that werreyed Russye, 10
Thurgh which ther dyde many a doughty man.
This noble kyng was cleped Cambynskan,
Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun,
That ther was nowher in no regioun
So excellent a lord in alle thyng. 15
Hym lakked noght that longeth to a kyng;
And of the secte, of which that he was born,
He kepte his lay, to which that he was sworn;
And therto he was hardy, wys, and riche,
Pitous, and just, and everemoore yliche, 20
Sooth of his word, benigne, and honourable,
Of his corage as any centre stable,
Yong, fressh, strong, and in armes desirous
As any bacheler of al his hous.
A fair persone he was, and fortunat, 25
And kepte alwey so wel roial estat
That ther was nowher swich another man.
This noble kyng, this Tartre Cambynskan,
Hadde two sones on Elpheta his wyf,
Of whiche the eldeste highte Algarsyf, 30
That oother sone was cleped Cambalo.
A doghter hadde this worthy kyng also,
That yongest was, and highte Canacee.
But for to telle yow al hir beautee,
It lyth nat in my tonge nyn my konnyng. 35
I dar nat undertake so heigh a thyng;
Myn Englissh eek is insufficient.
I moste been a rethor excellent,

20 and pitous; *and everemoore* alwey.

That koude hise colours longynge for that art,
 If he sholde hir discryven every part. 40
 I am noon swich; I moot speke as I kan.
 And so bifel, that whan this Cambynskan
 Hath twenty wynter born his diademe,
 As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme,
 He leet the feeste of his nativitee 45
 Doon cryen thurghout Sarray his citee,
 The last Idus of March after the yeer.
 Phebus the sonne ful joly was and cleer,
 For he was neigh his exaltacioun
 In Martes face, and in his mansioun 50
 In Aries, the colerik hoote signe.
 Ful lusty was the weder, and benigne,
 For which the foweles agayn the sonne sheene,
 What for the sesoun and the yonge grene,
 Ful loude songen hir affeccious; 55
 Hem semed han geten hem protecciouns
 Agayn the swerd of wynter, keene and coold.
 This Cambynskan, of which I have yow toold,
 In roial vestiment sit on his deys,
 With diademe, ful heighe in his paleys, 60
 And halt his feeste so solempne and so ryche,
 That in this world ne was ther noon it lyche.
 Of which, if I shal tellen al tharray,
 Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day,
 And eek it nedeth nat for to devyse, 65
 At every cours, the ordre of hire servyse.
 I wol nat tellen of hir strange sewes,
 Ne of hir swannes, nor of hire heronsewes;
 Eek in that lond, as tellen knyghtes olde,
 Ther is som mete that is ful deynte holde, 70
 That in this lond men recche of it but smal—
 Ther nys no man that may reporten al.
 I wol nat taryen yow, for it is pryme,

And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme.
 Unto my firste I wole have my recours. 75
 And so bifel, that after the thridde cours
 Whil that this kyng sit thus in his nobleye,
 Herknyng his mynstrals hir thynges pleye
 Biforn hym at the bord deliciously,
 In at the halle dore al sodeynly 80
 Ther cam a knyght, upon a steede of bras,
 And in his hand a brood mirour of glas,
 Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ryng,
 And by his syde a naked swerd hangyng.
 And up he rideth to the heighe bord. 85
 In al the hall ne was ther spoken a word
 For merveille of this knyght; hym to biholde
 Ful bisily ther wayten yonge and olde.
 This strange knyght, that cam thus sodeynly
 Al armed, save his heed, ful richely, 90
 Saleweth kyng, and queene, and lordes alle,
 By ordre, as they seten in the halle,
 With so heigh reverence and obeisaunce,
 As wel in speche as in contenaunce,
 That Gawayn, with his olde curteisye, 95
 Though he were comen ayeyn out of Fairye,
 Ne koude hym nat amende with a word.
 And after this, biforn the heighe bord
 He with a manly voys seith his message,
 After the forme used in his langage, 100
 Withouten vice of silable or of lettre.
 And for his tale sholde seme the bettre,
 Accordant to his wordes was his cheere,
 As techeth art of speche hem that it leere.
 Al be it that I kan nat sowne his stile, 105
 Ne kan nat clymben over so heigh a style,
 Yet seye I this, as to commune entente,
 Thus muche amounteth al that evere he mente,

If it so be that I have it in mynde.
 He seyde, "The kyng of Arabe and of Inde, 110
 My lige lord, on this solempne day
 Saleweth yow, as he best kan and may;
 And sendeth yow, in honour of your feeste,
 By me, that am al redy at your heeste,
 This steede of bras, that esily and weel 115
 Kan in the space of o day natureel,
 This is to seyn, in foure and twenty houres,
 Wherso yow lyst, in droghte or elles shoures,
 Beren youre body into every place
 To which youre herte wilneth for to pace, 120
 Withouten wem of yow, thurgh foul or fair.
 Or if yow lyst to fleen as hye in the air
 As dooth an egle, whan that hym list to soore,
 This same steede shal bere yow evere moore
 Withouten harm, til ye be ther yow leste, 125
 Though that ye slepen on his bak or reste;
 And turne ayeyn, with writhyng of a pyn.
 He that it wroghte, koude ful many a gyn;
 He wayted many a constellacioun
 Er he had doon this operacioun; 130
 And knew ful many a seel, and many a bond.
 This mirrour eek, that I have in myn hond,
 Hath swich a myght, that men may in it see
 Whan ther shal fallen any adversitee
 Unto your regne, or to yourself also, 135
 And openly who is your freend, or foo.
 And over al this, if any lady bright
 Hath set hir herte in any maner wight,
 If he be fals, she shal his tresoun see,
 His newe love, and al his subtiltee 140
 So openly, that ther shal no thyng hyde.
 Wherefore, ageyn this lusty someres tyde,
 This mirrour and this ryng that ye may see,
 He hath sent unto my lady Canacee,

Your excellente doghter that is heere. 145
 The vertu of the ryng, if ye wol heere,
 Is this, that if hir lust it for to were
 Upon hir thombe, or in hir purs it bere,
 Ther is no fowel that fleeth under the hevene
 That she ne shal wel understonde his stevene, 150
 And knowe his menyng openly and pleyn,
 And answeere hym in his langage ageyn.
 And every gras that groweth upon roote,
 She shal eek knowe, and whom it wol do boote,
 Al be hise woundes never so depe and wyde. 155
 This naked swerd, that hangeth by my syde
 Swich vertu hath, that what man so ye smyte
 Thurghout his armure it wole hym kerve and byte,
 Were it as thikke as is a branched ook.
 And what man that is wounded with a strook 160
 Shal never be hool, til that yow list of grace
 To stroke hym with the plate in thilke place
 Ther he is hurt; this is as muche to seyn,
 Ye moote with the plate swerd ageyn
 Strike hym in the wounde, and it wol close. 165
 This is a verray sooth withouten glose.
 It failleth nat, whils it is in youre hoold.”
 And whan this knyght hath thus his tale toold,
 He rideth out of halle, and doun he lighte.
 His steede, which that shoon as sonne brighte, 170
 Stant in the court, as stille as any stoon.
 This knyght is to his chambre lad anon,
 And is unarmed and unto mete yset.
 The presentes been ful roially yfet,
 This is to seyn, the swerd and the mirour, 175
 And born anon into the heighe tour
 With certeine officers ordeyned therfore.
 And unto Canacee this ryng was bore,
 Solempnely, ther she sit at the table.

But sikerly, withouten any fable, 180
 The hors of bras, that may nat be remewed,
 It stant as it were to the ground yglewed.
 Ther may no man out of the place it dryve,
 For noon engyn of wyndas ne polyve;
 And cause why, for they kan nat the craft, 185
 And therfore in the place they han it laft,
 Til that the knyght hath taught hem the manere
 To voyden hym, as ye shal after heere.
 Greet was the prees that swarmeth to and fro
 To gauren on this hors, that stondeth so. 190
 For it so heigh was, and so brood, and long,
 So wel proporcioned for to been strong,
 Right as it were a steede of Lumbardye;
 Therwith so horsly and so quyk of eye,
 As it a gentil Poilleys courser were. 195
 For certes, fro his tayl unto his ere,
 Nature ne art ne koude hym nat amende
 In no degree, as al the peple wende.
 But everemoore hir mooste wonder was
 How that it koude go, and was of bras. 200
 It was a fairye, as al the peple semed.
 Diverse folk diversely they demed;
 As many heddes, as manye wittes ther been.
 They murmureden as dooth a swarm of been,
 And maden skiles after hir fantasies, 205
 Rehersynge of thise olde poetries,
 And seyde that it was lyk the Pegasee,
 The hors that hadde wynges for to flee;
 Or elles, it was the Grekes hors Synoun,
 That broghte Troie to destruccioun, 210
 As men in thise olde geestes rede.
 "Myn herte," quod oon, "is everemoore in drede.
 I trowe som men of armes been therinne,
 That shapen hem this citee for to wyne.
 It were right good that al swich thyng were knowe." 215

Another rownded to his felawe lowe,
 And seyde, "He lyeth; it is rather lyk
 An apparence ymaad by som magyk,
 As jogelours pleyen at thise feestes grete."
 Of sondry doutes thus they jangle and trete, 220
 As lewed peple demeth comunly
 Of thynges that been maad moore subtilly
 Than they kan in hir lewednesse comprehende;
 They demen gladly to the badder ende.
 And somme of hem wondred on the mirour 225
 That born was up into the maister tour—
 How men myghte in it swiche thynges se.
 Another answerde, and seyde, "It myghte wel be
 Naturelly by composiciouns
 Of anglis and of slye reflexiouns;" 230
 And seyden, that in Rome was swich oon.
 They speken of Alocen and Vitulon,
 And Aristotle, that writen in hir lyves
 Of queynte mirours and of perspectives,
 As knowen they that han hir bookes herd. 235
 And oother folk han wondred on the swerd,
 That wolde percen thurgh out every thyng;
 And fille in speche of Thelophus the kyng
 And of Achilles with his queynte spere,
 For he koude with it bothe heele and dere, 240
 Right in swich wise as men may with the swerd,
 Of which right now ye han yourselven herd.
 They speken of sondry hardyng of metal,
 And speke of medicynes therwithal,
 And how and whanne it sholde yharded be, 245
 Which is unknowe, algates unto me.
 Tho speeke they of Canacees ryng,
 And seyden alle, that swich a wonder thyng
 Of craft of rynges herde they nevere noon;
 Save that he Moyses, and kyng Salomon 250

Hadde a name of konnyng in swich art.
 Thus seyn the peple, and drawen hem apart.
 But nathelees, somme seiden that it was
 Wonder to maken of fern asshen glas,
 And yet nys glas nat lyk asshen of fern; 255
 But for they han knowen it so fern,
 Therfore cesseth hir janglyng and hir wonder.
 As soore wondren somme on cause of thonder,
 On ebbe, on flood, on gossomer, and on myst,
 And alle thyng, til that the cause is wyst. 260
 Thus jangle they, and demen, and devyse,
 Til that the kyng gan fro the bord aryse.
 Phebus hath laft the angle meridional,
 And yet ascendyng was the beest roial,
 The gentil Leoun, with his Aldrian, 265
 Whan that this Tartre kyng, this Cambynskan
 Roos fro his bord, ther that he sat ful hye.
 Toform hym gooth the loude mynstralceye
 Til he cam to his chambre of parementz,
 Ther as they sownen diverse intrumentz 270
 That it is lyk an hevene for to heere.
 Now dauncen lusty Venus children deere,
 For in the Fyssh hir lady sat ful hye,
 And looketh on hem with a freendly eye.
 This noble kyng is set up in his trone; 275
 This strange knyght is fet to hym ful soone,
 And on the daunce he gooth with Canacee.
 Heere is the revel and the jolitee
 That is nat able a dul man to devyse;
 He moste han knowen love and his servyse, 280
 And been a feestlych man as fressh as May,
 That sholde yow devysen swich array.
 Who koude telle yow the forme of daunces,
 So unkouthe and so fresshe contenaunces,
 Swich subtil lookyng and dissymulynges, 285

For drede of jalouse mennes aperceyvynge?
 No man but Launcelet, and he is deed.
 Therfore I passe of al this lustiheed;
 I sey namoore, but in this jolynesse
 I lete hem, til men to the soper dresse. 290
 The styward bit the spices for to hye,
 And eek the wyn, in al this melodye;
 The usshers and the squiers been ygoon,
 The spices and the wyn is come anon,
 They ete and drynke, and whan this hadde an ende, 295
 Unto the temple, as reson was, they wende.
 The service doon, they soupen al by day;
 What nedeth me rehercen hir array?
 Ech man woot wel, that at a kynges feeste
 Hath plentee, to the mooste and to the leeste, 300
 And deyntees mo than been in my knowyng.
 At after soper gooth this noble kyng,
 To seen this hors of bras, with al the route
 Of lordes, and of ladyes hym aboute.
 Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of bras, 305
 That syn the grete sege of Troie was,
 Ther as men wondreden on an hors also,
 Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho.
 But fynally, the kyng axeth this knyght
 The vertu of this courser, and the myght; 310
 And preyde hym to telle his governaunce.
 This hors anon bigan to trippe and daunce,
 Whan that this knyght leyde hand upon his reyne,
 And seyde, "Sire, ther is namoore to seyne,
 But whan yow list to ryden any where, 315
 Ye mooten trille a pyn, stant in his ere,
 Which I shal telle yow bitwix us two.
 Ye moote nempne hym to what place also,
 Or to what contree, that yow list to ryde,
 And whan ye come ther as yow list abyde, 320

Bidde hym descende, and trille another pyn,
 (For therin lith theeffect of al the gyn)
 And he wol doun descende, and doon youre wille.
 And in that place he wol stonde stille,
 Though al the world the contrarie hadde yswore; 325
 He shal nat thennes been ydrawe ne ybore.
 Or, if yow liste, bidde hym thennes goon,
 Trille this pyn, and he wol varysshe anoon
 Out of the sighte of every maner wight,
 And come agayn, be it day or nyght, 330
 Whan that yow list to clepen hym ageyn,
 In swich a gyse as I shal to yow seyn,
 Bitwixe yow and me, and that ful soone.
 Ride whan yow list; ther is namoore to doone."
 Enformed whan the kyng was of that knyght, 335
 And hath conceyved in his wit aright
 The manere and the forme of al this thyng,
 Thus glad and blithe this noble doughty kyng
 Repeireth to his revel as biforn.
 The brydel is unto the tour yborn, 340
 And kept among hise jueles, leeve and deere.
 The hors varysshed, I noot in what manere,
 Out of hir sighte; ye gete namoore of me.
 But thus I lete in lust and jolitee
 This Cambynskan, hise lordes festeiynge, 345
 Til wel ny the day bigan to sprynge.

Explicit prima pars.

Sequitur pars secunda.

The norice of digestioun, the sleepe,
 Gan on hem wynke, and bad hem taken keepe,
 That muchel drynke and labour wolde han reste;
 And with a galpyng mouth hem alle he keste, 350

And seyde, "It was tyme to lye adoun,
For blood was in his domynacioun.
Cherisseth blood, natures freend," quod he.
They thanken hym, galpyng, by two, by thre,
And every wight gan drawe hym to his reste, 355
As sleep hem bad; they tooke it for the beste.
Hir dremes shul nat been ytoold for me;
Ful were hir heddes of fumositee,
That causeth dreem, of which ther nys no charge.
They slepen til that it was pryme large, 360
The mooste part, but it were Canacee;
She was ful mesurable, as wommen be.
For of hir fader hadde she take leve
To goon to reste, soone after it was eve.
Hir liste nat appalled for to be, 365
Ne on the morwe unfeestlich for to se:
And slepte hir firste sleepe, and thanne awook;
For swich a joye she in hir herte took,
Bothe of hir queynte ryng and hire mirour,
That twenty tyme she changed hir colour, 370
And in hir sleep right for impressioun
Of hir mirour she hadde a visioun.
Wherefore, er that the sonne gan up glyde,
She cleped on hir maistresse, hir bisyde,
And seyde, that hir liste for to ryse. 375
Thise olde wommen that been gladly wyse,
As hir maistresse answerde hir anon,
And seyde, "Madame, whider wil ye goon
Thus erly, for the folk been alle on reste?"
"I wol," quod she, "arise, for me leste 380
No lenger for to slepe; and walke aboute."
Hir maistresse clepeth wommen a greet route,
And up they rysen wel an ten or twelve.
Up riseth fresshe Canacee herselfe,
As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne, 385
That in the Ram is foure degrees upronne,

Noon hyer was he, whan she redy was;
 And forth she walketh esily a pas,
 Arrayed after the lusty sesoun soote,
 Lightly for to pleye and walke on foote, 390
 Nat but with fyve or sixe of hir meynnee;
 And in a trench forth in the park gooth she.

The vapour, which that fro the erthe glood,
 Made the sonne to seme rody and brood;
 But nathelees, it was so fair a sighte 395
 That it made alle hir hertes for to lighte,
 What for the sesoun and the morwenynge,
 And for the foweles that she herde synge;
 For right anon she wiste what they mente
 Right by hir song, and knew al hir entente. 400
 The knotte, why that every tale is toold,
 If it be taried til that lust be coold

Of hem that han it after herkned yoore,
 The savour passeth ever lenger the moore,
 For fulsomnesse of his prolixitee; 405

And by the same resoun thynketh me,
 I sholde to the knotte condescende,
 And maken of hir walkyng soone an ende.
 Amydde a tree fordryed, as whit as chalk,
 As Canacee was pleyyng in hir walk, 410

Ther sat a faucon over hir heed ful hye,
 That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
 That all the wode resounded of hir cry.
 Ybeten hath she herself so pitously
 With bothe hir wynges, til the rede blood 415

Ran endelong the tree ther as she stood,
 And evere in oon she cryde alwey and shrighthe,
 And with hir beek hirselves so she prighthe,
 That ther nys tygre, ne noon so cruuel beest
 That dwelleth outhur in wode or in forest 420
 That nolde han wept, if that he wepe koude

For sorwe of hir, she shrighthe alwey so loude.
 For ther nas nevere yet no man on lyve
 (If that I koude a faucon wel discryve),
 That herde of swich another of fairnesse, 425
 As wel of plumage as of gentillesse
 Of shape and al that myghte yrekened be.
 A faucon peregryn thanne semed she
 Of fremde land, and everemoore as she stood
 She swowneth now and now for lakke of blood, 430
 Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.
 This faire kynges doghter Canacee,
 That on hir fynger baar the queynte ryng,
 Thurgh which she understood wel every thyng
 That any fowel may in his leden seyn, 435
 And koude answeren hym in his ledene ageyn,
 Hath understonde what this faucoun seyde,
 And wel neigh for the routhe almoost she deyde.
 And to the tree she gooth ful hastily,
 And on this faukoun looketh pitously, 440
 And heeld hir lappe abroad, for wel she wiste
 The faukon moste fallen fro the twiste,
 Whan that it swowned next, for lakke of blood.
 A longe while to wayten hir she stood,
 Til atte laste she spak in this manere 445
 Unto the hauk, as ye shal after heere.
 "What is the cause, if it be for to telle,
 That ye be in this furial pyne of helle?"
 Quod Canacee unto the hauk above,
 "Is this for sorwe of deeth, or los of love? 450
 For, as I trowe, thise been causes two
 That causeth moost a gentil herte wo.
 Of oother harm it nedeth nat to speke,
 For ye yourself upon yourself yow wreke,
 Which proveth wel, that outhere love or drede 455
 Moot been enchesoun of your cruel dede,

Syn that I see noon oother wight yow chace.
 For love of God as dooth yourselven grace,
 Or what may been your helpe? for west nor est
 Ne saugh I nevere er now no bryd ne beast 460
 That ferde with hymself so pitously.
 Ye sle me with your sorwe, verrailly,
 I have of yow so greet compassioun.
 For Goddes love com fro the tree adoun,
 And as I am a kynges doghter trewe, 465
 If that I verrailly the cause knewe
 Of your disese, if it lay in my myght
 I wolde amenden it er that it were nyght,
 As wisly helpe me, grete god of kynde!
 And herbes shal I right ynowe yfynde, 470
 To heele with youre hurtes hastily."

Tho shrighthe this faucoun moore yet pitously
 Than ever she dide, and fil to grounde anon
 And lith aswowne, deed, and lyk a stoon,
 Til Canacee hath in hir lappe hir take 475
 Unto the tyme she gan of swough awake.
 And after that she of hir swough gan breyde,
 Right in hir haukes ledene thus she seyde:
 "That pitee renneth soone in gentil herte,
 Feelynge his similitude in peynes smerte, 480
 Is preved al day, as men may it see,
 As wel by werk as by auctoritee.
 For gentil herte kitheth gentillesse.
 I se wel, that ye han of my distresse
 Compassioun, my faire Canacee, 485
 Of verray wommanly benignytee
 That nature in youre principles hath set.
 But for noon hope for to fare the bet,
 But for to obeye unto youre herte free,
 And for to maken othere be war by me, 490
 As by the whelp chasted is the leoun,

Right for that cause and that conclusioun
 Whil that I have a leyser and a space,
 Myn harm I wol confessen, er I pace."
 And evere whil that oon hir sorwe tolde, 495
 That oother weep, as she to water wolde,
 Til that the faucoun bad hire to be stille;
 And with a syk right thus she seyde hir wille.
 "Ther I was bred, allas, that harde day!
 And fostred in a roche of marbul gray 500
 So tendrely, that no thyng eyled me;
 I nyste nat what was adversitee,
 Til I koude flee ful hye under the sky.
 Tho dwelte a tercelet me faste by
 That semed welle of alle gentillesse, 505
 Al were he ful of tresoun and falsnesse;
 It was so wrapped under humble cheere,
 And under hewe of trouthe in swich manere,
 Under plesance, and under bisy payne,
 That I ne koude han wend he koude feyne, 510
 So depe in greyn he dyed his colours.
 Right as a serpent hit hym under floures
 Til he may seen his tyme for to byte,
 Right so this god of love, this ypocryte,
 Dooth so hise cerymonyes and obeisaunces, 515
 And kepeth in semblant alle hise observaunces
 That sowneth into gentillesse of love.
 As in a toumbe is al the faire above,
 And under is the corps swich as ye woot,
 Swich was this ypocrite, bothe coold and hoot; 520
 And in this wise he served his entente,
 That—save the feend—noon wiste what he mente;
 Til he so longe hadde wopen and compleyned,
 And many a yeer his service to me feyned,
 Til that myn herte, to pitous and to nyce, 525
 Al innocent of his corowned malice,

For-fered of his deeth, as thoughte me,
 Upon hise othes and his seuretee,
 Graunted hym love up this condicioun
 That everemoore myn honour and renoun 530
 Were saved, bothe privee and apert.
 This is to seyn, that after his desert
 I yaf hym al myn herte and al my thought—
 God woot and he, that ootherwise noght!—
 And took his herte in chaunge for myn for ay. 535
 But sooth is seyde, goon sithen many a day,
 'A trewe wight and a thief thenken nat oon.'
 And whan he saugh the thyng so fer ygoon,
 That I hadde graunted hym fully my love,
 In swich a gyse as I have seyde above, 540
 And yeven hym my trewe herte, as free
 As he swoor he his herte yaf to me,
 Anon this tigre ful of doublenesse
 Fil on hise knees, with so devout humblesse,
 With so heigh reverence, and ás by his cheere 545
 So lyk a gentil love of manere,
 So ravysshed, as it semed, for the joye,
 That nevere Jason, ne Parys of Troye,
 Jason? certes, ne noon oother man
 Syn Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan 550
 To loven two, as writen folk biforn,
 Ne nevere syn the firste man was born,
 Ne koude man, by twenty thousand part,
 Countrefete the sophymes of his art;
 Ne were worthy unbokelen his gáloche, 555
 Ther doublenesse or feynyng sholde approche,
 Ne so koude thonke a wight as he dide me.
 His manere was an hevene for to see
 Til any womman, were she never so wys;
 So peynted he and kembde at point-devys 560
 As wel hise wordes as his contenance

And I so loved hym for his obeisaunce
And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,
That if so were that any thyng hym smerte,
Al were it never so lite, and I it wiste, 565
Me thoughte I felte deeth myn herte twiste.
And shortly so ferforth this thyng is went,
That my wyl was his willes instrument;
This is to seyn, my wyl obeyed his wyl
In alle thyng as fer as resoun fil, 570
Kepyng the boundes of my worship evere.
Ne nevere hadde I thyng so lief, ne levere,
As hym, God woot! ne nevere shal namo.
This lasteth lenger than a yeer or two,
That I supposed of hym noght but good. 575
But finally, thus atte laste it stood,
That Fortune wolde that he moste twynne
Out of that place, which that I was inne.
Wher me was wo that is no questioun;
I kan nat make of it discripsioun. 580
For o thyng dare I tellen boldely,
I knowe what is the peyne of deeth therby.
Swich harme I felte, for he ne myghte bileve;
So on a day of me he took his leve
So sorwefully eek, that I wende verrailly, 585
That he had felt as muche harm as I,
Whan that I herde hym speke, and saugh his hewe.
But natheles, I thoughte he was so trewe,
And eek that he repaire sholde ageyn
Withinne a litel while, sooth to seyn, 590
And resoun wolde eek that he moste go
For his honour, as ofte it happeth so,
That I made vertu of necessitee,
And took it wel, syn that it moste be.
As I best myghte, I hidde fro hym my sorwe, 595
And took hym by the hond, seint John to borwe,
And seyde hym thus, 'Lo I am youres al.

Beth swich as I to yow have been, and shal.
 What he answerde, it nedeth noght reherce,
 Who kan sey bet than he? who kan do werse? 600
 Whan he hath al wel seyde, thanne hath he doon;
 'Therefore bihoveth hire a ful long spoon
 That shal ete with a feend,' thus herde I seye.
 So atte laste he moste forth his weye,
 And forth he fleeth, til he cam ther hym leste. 605
 Whan it cam hym to purpos for to reste,
 I trowe he hadde thilke text in mynde
 That 'alle thyng repeiryng to his kynde
 Gladeth hymself;' thus seyn men, as I gesse.
 Men loven of propre kynde newefangelnesse, 610
 As briddes doon, that men in cages fede,
 For though thou nyght and day take of hem hede,
 And strawe hir cage faire and softe as silk,
 And yeve hem sugre, hony, breed, and milk,
 Yet right anon as that his dore is uppe, 615
 He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,
 And to the wode he wole and wormes ete;
 So newefangel been they of hir mete,
 And loven novelrie of propre kynde.
 No gentillesse of blood ne may hem bynde. 620
 So ferde this tercelet, allas, the day!
 Though he were gentil born, and fressh, and gay,
 And goodlich for to seen, humble and free,
 He saugh upon a tyme a kyte flee,
 And sodeynly he loved this kyte so 625
 That al his love is clene fro me ago,
 And hath his trouthe falsed in this wyse.
 Thus hath the kyte my love in hire servyse,
 And I am lorn withouten remedie."
 And with that word this faucoun gan to crie, 630
 And swowned eft in Canacees barm.

Greet was the sorwe for the haukes harm

That Canacee and alle hir wommen made.
 They nyste hou they myghte the faucoun glade;
 But Canacee hom bereth hir in hir lappe, 635
 And softly in plastres gan hir wrappe,
 Ther as she with hir beek hadde hurt hirselve.
 Now kan nat Canacee but herbes delve
 Out of the ground, and make saves newe
 Of herbes precieuse and fyne of hewe, 640
 To heelen with this hauk; fro day to nyght
 She dooth hir bisynesse and al hir myght.
 And by hir beddes heed she made a mewe,
 And covered it with veluettes blewe,
 In signe of trouthe that is in wommen sene. 645
 And al withoute, the mewe is peynted grene,
 In which were ypeynted alle thise false fowles,
 As beth thise tidyves, tercelettes, and owles,
 Right for despit were peynted hem bisyde,
 And pyes on hem for to crie and chyde. 650
 Thus lete I Canacee hir hauk kepyng;
 I wol namoore as now speke of hir ryng,
 Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
 How that this faucoun gat hire love ageyn
 Repentant, as the storie telleth us, 655
 By mediacioun of Cambalus,
 The kynges sone, of which that I yow tolde.
 But hennesforth I wol my proces holde
 To speken of adventures and of batailles,
 That nevere yet was herd so grete mervailles. 660
 First wol I telle yow of Cambynskan,
 That in his tyme many a citee wan;
 And after wol I speke of Algarsif,
 How that he wan Theodora to his wif,
 For whom ful ofte in greet peril he was, 665
 Ne hadde he be holpen by the steede of bras;
 And after wol I speke of Cambalo

That faught in lystes with the bretheren two
For Canacee, er that he myghte hir wynne.
And ther I lefte, I wol ayeyn bigynne.

670

Explicit secunda pars.

Incipit pars tercia.

Appollo whirleth up his chaar so hye
Til that the god Mercurius hous, the slye—

670 An.

[*Unfinished.*]

PROLOGUE TO THE FRANKELEYNS TALE

*Heere folwen the wordes of the Frankelyn to the Squier,
and the wordes of the hoost to the Frankelyn.*

“In feith, Squier, thow hast thee wel yquit,
And gentilly I preise wel thy wit,”
Quod the Frankeleyn, “considerynge thy yowthe, 675
So feelyngly thou spekest, sire, I allow the;
As to my doom, ther is noon that is heere
Of eloquence that shal be thy peere,
If that thou lyve—God yeve thee good chaunce,
And in vertu sende thee continuance! 680
For of thy speche I have greet deyntee;
I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee,
I hadde levere than twenty pound worth lond,
Though it right now were fallen in myn hond,
He were a man of swich discrecioun 685
As that ye been; fy on possessioun
But if a man be vertuous withal!
I have my sone snybbed, and yet shal,
For he to vertu listneth nat entende,
But for to pleye at dees, and to despende 690
And lese al that he hath, is his usage.
And he hath levere talken with a page
Than to comune with any gentil wight
There he myghte lerne gentillesse aright.”
“Straw for youre gentillesse,” quod our Hoost, 695
What, Frankeleyn, pardee! sire, wel thou woost
That ech of yow moot tellen atte leste
A tale or two, or breken his biheste.”
“That knowe I wel, sire,” quod the Frankeleyn,
“I prey yow, haveth me nat in desdeyn 700

Though to this man I speke a word or two."

"Telle on thy tale, withouten wordes mo."

"Glady, sire Hoost," quod he, "I wole obeye

Unto your wyl; now herkneth what I seye.

I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse

As fer as that my wittes wol suffyse;

I prey to God that it may plesen yow,

Thanne woot I wel that it is good ynow."

THE FRANKELEYNS TALE

The Prologe of the Frankeleyns tale.

Thise olde gentil Britouns in hir dayes
Of diverse aventures maden layes, 710
Rymeyed in hir firste Briton tonge;
Whiche layes with hir instrumentz they songe,
Or elles reddeden hem, for hir plesaunce.
And oon of hem have I in remembraunce,
Which I shal seyn, with good-wyl, as I kan. 715
But sires, by cause I am a burel man,
At my bigynnyng first I yow biseche,
Have me excused of my rude speche.
I lerned nevere rethorik, certeyn;
Thyng that I speke, it moot be bare and pleyn. 720
I sleep nevere on the Mount of Parnaso,
Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Scithero.
Colours ne knowe I none, withouten drede,
But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
Or elles swiche, as men dye or peynte. 725
Colours of rethoryk been me to queynte,
My spirit feeleth noght of swich mateere;
But if yow list, my tale shul ye heere.

Heere bigynneth the Frankeleyns tale.

In Armorik, that-called is Britayne,
Ther was a knyght that loved and dide his payne 730
To serve a lady in his beste wise;
And many a labour, many a greet emprise,
He for his lady wroghte, er she were wonne.

For she was oon the faireste under sonne,
 And eek therto comen of so heigh kynrede 735
 That wel unnethes dorste this knyght for drede
 Telle hir his wo, his peyne, and his distresse.
 But atte laste, she for his worthynesse,
 And namely for his meke obeysaunce,
 Hath swiche a pitee caught of his penaunce, 740
 That pryvely she fil of his accord
 To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord—
 Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir wyves—
 And for to lede the moore in blisse hir lyves,
 Of his free wyl he swoor hir as a knyght, 745
 That nevere in al his lyf he, day ne nyght,
 Ne sholde upon hym take no maistrie
 Agayn hir wyl, ne kithe hir jalousie,
 But hir obeye and folwe hir wyl in al
 As any love to his lady shal; 750
 Save that the name of soveraynetee,
 That wolde he have, for shame of his degree.
 She thanked hym, and with ful greet humblesse
 She seyde, "Sire, siþh of youre gentillesse
 Ye profre me to have so large a reyne, 755
 Ne wolde nevere God bitwixe us tweyne,
 As in my gilt, were outhur werre or stryf.
 Sir, I wol be your humble trewe wyf,
 Have heer my trouthe til that myn herte breste."
 Thus been they bothe in quiete and in reste. 760
 For o thyng, sires, sauþly dar I seye,
 That freendes everych outhur moot obeye,
 If they wol longe holden compaignye.
 Love wol nat been constreyned by maistrýe;
 Whan maistrie comth, the God of Love anon 765
 Beteth hise wynges, and farewel, he is gon!
 Love is a thyng as any spirit free.
 Wommen of kynde desiren libertee,
 And nat to been constreyned as a thral—

And so doon men, if I sooth seyen shal. 770
 Looke who that is moost pacient in love,
 He is at his avantage al above.
 Pacience is an heigh vertu, certeyn,
 For it venquysseth, as thise clerkes seyn,
 Thynges that rigour sholde nevere atteyne. 775
 For every word men may nat chide or pleyne,
 Lerneth to suffre, or elles, so moot I goon,
 Ye shul it lerne, wherso ye wole or noon.
 For in this world, certein, ther no wight is
 That he ne dooth or seith som tyme amys. 780
 Ire, siknesse, or constellacioun
 Wyn, wo, or chaungynge of complexioun
 Causeth ful ofte to doon amys or speken.
 On every wrong a man may nat be wreken;
 After the tyme moste be temperaunce 785
 To every wight that kan on governaunce.
 And therefore hath this wise worthy knyght,
 To lyve in ese, suffrance hir bihight,
 And she to hym ful wisly gan to swere
 That nevere sholde ther be defaute in here. 790
 Heere may men seen an humble wys accord!
 Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord,
 Servant in love, and lord in mariage;
 Thanne was he bothe in lordship and servage—
 Servage? nay but in lordshipe above, 795
 Sith he hath bothe his lady and his love—
 His lady, certes, and his wyf also,
 The which that lawe of love acordeth to.
 And whan he was in this prosperitee,
 Hoom with his wyf he gooth to his contree, 800
 Nat fer fro Pedmark, ther his dwellyng was,
 Where as he lyveth in blisse and in solas.
 Who koude telle, but he hadde wedded be,
 The joye, the ese, and the prosperitee
 That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf? 805

A yeer and moore lasted this blisful lyf,
 Til that the knyght of which I speke of thus,
 That of Kayrrud was cleped Arveragus,
 Shoop hym to goon, and dwelle a yeer or tweyne,
 In Engelond, that cleped was eek Briteyne, 810
 To seke in armes worship and honour—
 For al his lust he sette in swich labour—
 And dwelled there two yeer, the book seith thus.
 Now wol I stynten of this Arveragus
 And speken I wole of Dorigene his wyf, 815
 That loveth hir housbonde as hir hertes lyf.
 For his absence wepeth she and siketh,
 As doon thise noble wyves whan hem liketh.
 She moorneth, waketh, wayleth, fasteth, pleyneth,
 Desir of his presence hir so destreyneth, 820
 That al this wyde world she sette at noght.
 Hir freendes whiche that knewe hir hevy thoght,
 Conforten hir in al that ever they may.
 They prechen hir, they telle hir nyght and day
 That causelees she sleeth herself, allas! 825
 And every confort possible in this cas
 They doon to hir, with all hir bisynesse,
 Al for to make hir leve hir hevynesse.
 By proces, as ye knowen everichoon,
 Men may so longe graven in a stoon, 830
 Til som figure therinne emprented be.
 So longe han they confortd hir, til she
 Receyved hath by hope and by resoun
 The emprentyng of hir consolacioun,
 Thurgh which hir grete sorwe gan aswage; 835
 She may nat alwey duren in swich rage.
 And eek Arveragus, in al this care,
 Hath sent hir lettres hoom of his welfare,
 And that he wol come hastily agayn,
 Or elles hadde this sorwe hir herte slayn. 840
 Hir freendes sawe hir sorwe gan to slake,

And preyden hir on knees, for Goddes sake,
 To come and romen hir in compaignye,
 Away to dryve hir derke fantasye.
 And finally she graunted that requeste, 845
 For wel she saugh that it was for the beste.

Now stood hir castel faste by the see;
 And often with hir freendes walketh shee
 Hir to disporte, upon the bank an heigh,
 Where as she many a ship and barge seigh 850
 Seillynge hir cours, where as hem liste go.
 But thanne was that a parcel of hir wo,
 For to himself ful ofte "allas," seith she,
 "Is ther no ship of so many as I se
 Wol bryngen hom my lord? thanne were myn herte 855
 Al warissshed of hise bittre peynes smerte."

Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and thynke
 And caste hir eyen downward fro the brynke;
 But whan she saugh the grisly rokkes blake,
 For verray feere, so wolde hir herte quake 860
 That on hir feet she myghte hir noght sustene.
 Thanne wolde she sitte adoun upon the grene,
 And pitously into the see biholde,
 And seyn right thus, with sorweful sikes colde:

"Eterne God, that thurgh thy purveiaunce 865
 Ledest the world by certein governaunce,
 In ydel, as men seyn, ye no thyng make.
 But, lord, thise grisly fēendly rokkes blake,
 That semen rather a foul confusioun
 Of werk, than any fair creaçioun 870
 Of swich a parfit wys God and a stable,
 Why han ye wroght this werk unresonable?
 For by this werk, south, north, ne west ne eest
 Ther nys yfostred man, ne bryd, ne beest.
 It dooth no good, to my wit, but anoyeth, 875
 Se ye nat, lord, how mankynde it destroyeth?

An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde
 Han rokkes slayn, al þe they nat in mynde;
 Which mankynde is so fair part of thy werk
 That thou it madest lyk to thyn owene merk. 880
 Thanne semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee
 Toward mankynde; but how thanne may it bee
 That ye swiche meenes make it to destroyen,
 Whiche meenes do no good, but evere anoyen?
 I woot wel clerkes wol seyn, as hem leste, 885
 By argumentz, that al is for the beste,
 Though I ne kan the causes nat yknowe,
 But thilke God, that made wynd to blowe,
 As kepe my lord; this my conclusioun.
 To clerkes lete I al this disputisoun— 890
 But wolde God, that alle thise rokkes blake,
 Were sonken into helle for his sake!
 Thise rokkes sleen myn herte for the feere!"
 Thus wolde she seyn, with many a pitous teere.
 Hir freendes sawe that it was no disport 895
 To romen by the see, but discomfort,
 And shopen for to pleyen somwher elles;
 They leden hir by ryveres and by welles,
 And eek in othere places delitables,
 They dauncen, and they pleyen at ches and tables. 900
 So on a day, right in the morwe tyde,
 Unto a gardyn that was ther bisyde,
 In which that they hadde maad hir ordinaunce
 Of vitaille and of oother purveiaunce,
 They goon and pleye hem al the longe day. 905
 And this was in the sixte morwe of May,
 Which May hadde peynted with his softe shoures
 This gardyn ful of leves and of floures,
 And craft of mannes hand so curiously
 Arrayed hadde this gardyn trewely, 910
 That nevere was ther gardyn of swich prys

But if it were the verray Paradys.
 The odour of floures and the fresshe sighte
 Wolde han maked any herte lighte
 That evere was born, but if to greet siknesse 915
 Or to greet sorwe helde it in distresse;
 So ful it was of beautee with plesaunce.
 At after dyner gonne they to daunce
 And synge also, save Dorigen allone,
 Which made alwey hir compleint and hir moone 920
 For she ne saugh hym on the daunce go
 That was hir housbonde, and hir love also.
 But nathelees she moste a tyme abyde,
 And with good hope lete hir sorwe slyde.
 Upon this daunce, amonges othere men, 925
 Daunced a squier biforn Dorigen
 That fressher was, and jolyer of array,
 As to my doom, than is the monthe of May.
 He syngeth, daunceth, passynge any man
 That is or was, sith that the world bigan. 930
 Therwith he was, if men sholde hym discryve,
 Oon of the beste farynge man on lyve;
 Yong, strong, right vertuous, and riche, and wys,
 And wel biloved, and holden in greet prys.
 And shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal, 935
 Unwityng of this Dorigen at al,
 This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
 Which that ycleped was Aurelius,
 Hadde loved hir best of any creature
 Two yeer and moore, as was his aventure; 940
 But nevere dorste he tellen hir his grevaunce,
 Withouten coppe he drank al his penaunce.
 He was despayred, no thyng dorste he seye
 Save in his songes somewhat wolde he wreye
 His wo, as in a general compleynyng. 945
 He seyde he lovede, and was biloved no thyng,
 Of swich matere made he manye layes,

Songes, compleintes, roundels, virelayes,
 How that he dorste nat his sorwe telle,
 But langwisssheth, as a furye dooth in helle, 950
 And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko
 For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.
 In oother manere than ye heere me seye,
 Ne dorste he nat to hir his wo biwreye,
 Save that paraventure som tyme at daunces, 955
 Ther yonge folk kepen hir observaunces,
 It may wel be he looked on hir face,
 In swich a wise as man that asketh grace; ¹⁰¹⁷
 But no thyng wiste she of his entente.
 Nathelees it happed, er they thennes wente, 960
 By cause that he was hir neighebour,
 And was a man of worship and honour,
 And hadde yknowen hym of tyme yooore,
 They fille in speche, and forthe moore and moore
 Unto this purpos drough Aurelius. 965
 And whan he saugh his tyme, he seyde thus:
 "Madame," quod he, "by God that this world made,
 So that I wiste it myghte your herte glade,
 I wolde that day that youre Arveragus
 Wente over the see, that I, Aurelius, 970
 Hadde went ther nevere I sholde have come agayn.
 For wel I woot my servyce is in vayn,
 My gerdoun is but brestyng of myn herte.
 Madame, reweth upon my peynes smerte,
 For with a word ye may me sleen or save. 975
 Heere at your feet, God wolde that I were grave,
 I ne have as now no leyser moore to seye,
 Have mercy, sweete, or ye wol do me deye."
 She gan to looke upon Aurelius:
 "Is this youre wyl?" quod she, "and sey ye thus? 980
 "Nevere erst," quod she, "ne wiste I what ye mente.
 But now, Aurelie, I knowe youre entente.

By thilke God, that yaf me soule and lyf,
 Ne shal I nevere been untrewē wyf,
 In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit. 985
 I wol been his to whom that I am knyght.
 Taak this for fynal answerē as of me."
 But after that, in pley thus seyde she,
 "Aurelie," quod she, "by heighe God above,
 Yet wolde I graunte yow to been youre love, 990
 Syn I yow se so pitously complayne.
 Looke, what day that endelong Britayne
 Ye remoeve alle the rokkes, stoon by stoon,
 That they ne lette shipe ne boot to goon,
 I seye, whan ye han maad the coost so clene 995
 Of rokkes that ther nys no stoon ysene,
 Thanne wol I love yow best of any man!
 Have heer my trouthe in al that evere I kan."
 "Is ther noon oother grace in yow?" quod he.
 "No, by that lord," quod she, "that maked me; 1000
 For wel I woot that it shal never bityde;
 Lat swiche folies out of your herte slyde.
 What deyntee sholde a man han in his lyf
 For to go love another mannes wyf,
 That hath hir body whan so that hym liketh?" 1005
 Aurelius ful ofte soore siketh,
 Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,
 And with a sorweful herte he thus answerde.
 "Madame," quod he, "this were an impossible;
 Thanne moot I dye of sodeyn deth horrible." 1010
 And with that word he turned hym anon.
 Tho coome hir othere freendes many oon,
 And in the aleyes romeden up and doun,
 And no thyng wiste of this conclusioun,
 But sodeynly bigonne revel newe, 1015
 Til that the brighte sonne loste his hewe,
 For thorisonte hath reft the sonne his lyght—
 This is as muche to seye as, it was nyght—

And hoom they goon in joye and in solas,
 Save oonly wrecche Aurelius, alas! 1020
 He to his hous is goon with sorweful herte;
 He seeth he may nat fro his deeth asterte;
 Hym semed that he felte his herte colde;
 Up to the hevene hise handes he gan holde,
 And on hise knowes bare he sette hym doun, 1025
 And in his ravyng seyde his orisoun.
 For verray wo out of his wit he breyde;
 He nyste what he spak, but thus he seyde:
 With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bigonne
 Unto the goddes, and first unto the sonne 1030
 He seyde, "Appollo, God and governour
 Of every plaunte, herbe, tree, and flour
 That yevest after thy declinacioun
 To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun,
 As thyn herberwe chaungeth lowe or heighe, 1035
 Lord Phebus, cast thy merciãble eigne
 On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but lorn.
 Lo, lord, my lady hath my deeth ysworn
 Withoute gilt, but thy benignytee
 Upon my dedly herte have som pitee. 1040
 For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow lest,
 Ye may me helpen, save my lady, best.
 Now voucheth sauf that I may yow devyse
 How that I may been holpen and in what wyse.
 Your blisful suster, Lucina the sheene, 1045
 That of the see is chief goddesse and queene,
 (Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,
 Yet emperisse aboven hym is she)
 Ye knownen wel, lord, that right as hir desir
 Is to be quyked and lightned of youre fir, 1050
 For which she folweth yow ful bisily,
 Right so the see desireth naturelly
 To folwen hir, as she that is goddesse

Bothe in the see and ryveres moore and lesse.
 Wherefore, lord Phebus, this is my requeste; 1055
 Do this miracle, or do myn herte breste,
 That now next at this opposicioun
 Which in the signe shal be of the Leoun,
 As preieth hir, so greet a flood to brynge
 That fyve fadme at the leeste it oversprynge 1060
 The hyeste rokke in Armorik Briteyne,
 And lat this flood endure yeres tweyne.
 Thanne, certes, to my lady may I seye
 'Holdeth youre heste, the rokkes been aweye.'
 Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for me, 1065
 Preye hir she go no faster cours than ye.
 I seye, preyeth your suster that she go
 No faster cours than ye thise yeres two.
 Thanne shal she been evene atte fulle alway,
 And spryng flood laste bothe nyght and day; 1070
 And but she vouche sauf in swich manere
 To graunte me my sovereyn lady deere,
 Prey hir to synken every rok adoun
 Into hir owene dirke regioun
 Under the ground ther Pluto dwelleth inne, 1075
 Or nevere mo shal I my lady wyne.
 Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot seke,
 Lord Phebus; se the teeris on my cheke,
 And of my peyne have som compassioun!"
 And with that word in swowne he fil adoun, 1080
 And longe tyme he lay forth in a traunce.
 His brother, which that knew of his penaunce,
 Up caughte hym, and to bedde he hath hym broght.
 Dispeyred in this torment and this thoght
 Lete I this woful creature lye; 1085
 Chese he for me wheither he wol lyve or dye.

Arveragus with heele and greet honour,
 As he that was of chivalrie the flour,
 Is comen hoom, and othere worthy men.

O blisful artow now, thou Dorigen ! 1090
 That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne armes,
 The fresshe knyght, the worthy man of armes,
 That loveth thee, as his owene hertes lyf.
 No thyng list hym to been ymaginatyf
 If any wight hadde spoke, whil he was oute, 1095
 To hire of love; he hadde of it no doute,
 He noght entendeth to no swich mateere,
 But daunceth, justeth, maketh hir good checre,
 And thus in joye and blisse I lete hem dwelle,
 And of the sike Aurelius I wol telle. 1100
 In langour and in torment furyus
 Two yeer and moore lay wrecche Aurelyus,
 Er any foot he myghte on erthe gon;
 Ne confort in this tyme hadde he noon,
 Save of his brother, which that was a clerk. 1105
 He knew of al this wo and al this werk;
 For to noon oother creature, certeyn,
 Of this matere he dorste no word seyn.
 Under his brest he baar it moore secree
 Than evere dide Pamphilus for Galathee. 1110
 His brest was hool withoute for to sene,
 But in his herte ay was the arwe kene.
 And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
 In surgerye is perilous the cure,
 But men myghte touche the arwe, or come therby. 1115
 His brother weep and wayled pryvely,
 Til atte laste hym fil in remembraunce
 That whiles he was at Orliens in Fraunce,
 As yonge clerkes, that been lykerous
 To reden artes that been curious, 1120
 Seken in every halke and every herne
 Particular sciences for to lerne,
 He hym remembred, that upon a day
 At Orliens in studie a book he say

Of magyk natureel, which his felawe, 1125
 That was that tyme a bachelor of lawe—
 Al were he ther to lerne another craft—
 Hadde prively upon his desk ylaft;
 Which book spak muchel of the operaciouns,
 Touchynge the eighte and twenty mansiouns, 1130
 That longen to the moone, and swich folye
 As in oure dayes is nat worth a flye.
 For hooly chirches feith in oure bileve
 Ne suffreth noon illusioun us to greve.
 And whan this book was in his remembraunce, 1135
 Anon for joye his herte gan to daunce,
 And to hymself he seyde pryvely,
 “My brother shal be warissshed hastily;
 For I am siker that ther be sciences
 By whiche men make diverse apparences 1140
 Swiche as thise subtile tregetoures pleye;
 For ofte at feestes have I wel herd seye
 That tregetours withinne an halle large
 Have maad come in a water and a barge,
 And in the halle rowen up and doun. 1145
 Somtyme hath semed come a grym leoun;
 And somtyme floures sprynge as in a mede,
 Somtyme a vyne, and grapes white and rede,
 Somtyme a castel al of lym and stoon;
 And whan hem lyked, voyded it anoon, 1150
 Thus semed it to every mannes sighte.
 Now thanne conclude I thus, that if I myghte
 At Orliens som oold felawe yfynde
 That hadde this moones mansions in mynde,
 Or oother magyk natureel above, 1155
 He sholde wel make my brother han his love;
 For with an apparence a clerk may make
 To mannes sighte, that alle the rokkes blake
 Of Britaigne weren yvoyded everichon,

And shippes by the brynke comen and gon, 1160
 And in swich forme enduren a wowke or two;
 Thanne were my brother warissshed of his wo;
 Thanne moste she nedes holden hir biheste,
 Or elles he shal shame hir atte leeste."

What sholde I make a lenger tale of this? 1165
 Unto his brotheres bed he comen is,
 And swich confort he yaf hym for to gon
 To Orliens, that he up stirte anon
 And on his wey forthward thanne is he fare,
 In hope for to been lissed of his care. 1170

Whan they were come almoost to that citee,
 But if it were a two furlong or thre,
 A yong clerk romynge by hymself they mette
 Which that in Latyn thriftily hem grette,
 And after that he seyde a wonder thyng. 1175

"I knowe," quod he, "the cause of youre comyng."
 And er they ferther any foote wente,
 He tolde hem al that was in hire entente!
 This Briton clerk hym asked of felawes,
 The whiche that he had knowe in olde dawes; 1180

And he answerde hym that they dede were,
 For which he weep ful ofte many a teere.
 Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte anon,
 And with this magicien forth is he gon
 Hoom to his hous, and maden hem wel at ese; 1185

Hem lakked no vitaille that myghte hem plese,
 So wel arrayed hous as ther was oon,
 Aurelius in his lyf saugh nevere noon.
 He shewed hym, er he wente to sopeer,
 Forestes; parkes ful of wilde deer, 1190

Ther saugh he hertes with hir hornes hye,
 The gretteste that evere were seyn with eye,
 He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with houndes,
 And somme with arwes blede of bittre woundes.
 He saugh, whan voyded were thise wilde deer, 1195

These fauconers upon a fair ryver,
 That with hir haukes han the heroun slayn.
 Tho saugh he knyghtes justyng in a playn;
 And after this he dide hym swich plesaunce,
 That he hym shewed his lady on a daunce 1200
 On which hymself he daunced, as hym thoughte.
 And whan this maister that this magyk wroughte
 Saugh it was tyme, he clapte hise handes two,
 And farewell! al oure revel was ago!—
 And yet remoeved they nevere out of the hous, 1205
 Whil they saugh al this sighte merveillous,
 But in his studie, ther as hise bookes be,
 They seten stille, and no wight but they thre.
 To hym this maister called his squier,
 And seyde hym thus, "Is redy oure soper?" 1210
 Almoost an houre it is, I undertake,
 Sith I yow bad oure soper for to make,
 Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me
 Into my studie, ther as my bookes be."
 "Sire," quod this Squier, "whan it liketh yow, 1215
 It is al redy, though ye wol right now."
 "Go we thanne soupe," quod he, "as for the beste,
 This amorous folk som tyme moote han hir reste."
 At after soper fille they in trettee,
 What somme sholde this maistres gerdoun be, 1220
 To remoeven alle the rokkes of Britayne,
 And eek from Gerounde to the mouth of Sayne.
 He made it straunge, and swoor, so God hym save,
 Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde nat have,
 Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat goon. 1225
 Aurelius with blisful herte anon
 Answerde thus, "Fy on a thousand pound!
 This wyde world, which that men seye is round,
 I wolde it yeve, if I were lord of it.
 This bargayn is ful dryve, for we been knyht; 1230
 Ye shal be payed trewely, by my trouthe.

But looketh now for no necligence or slouthe
 Ye tarie us heere, no lenger than to-morwe." *as pledge*
 "Nay," quod this clerk, "have heer my feith to borwe."
 To bedde is goon Aurelius whan hym leste, 1235
 And wel ny al that nyght he hadde his reste;
 What for his labour and his hope of blisse,
 His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse.
 Upon the morwe, whan that it was day,
 To Britaigne tooke they the righte way, 1240
 Aurelie and this magicien bisyde,
 And been descended ther they wolde abyde.
 And this was, as thise bookes me remembre,
 The colde frosty sesoun of Decembre.
 Phebus wax old, and hewed lyk latoun, 1245
 That in his hoote declynacioun
 Shoon as the burned gold, with stremes brighte;
 But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,
 Where as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.
 The bittre frostes, with the sleet and reyn, 1250
 Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd;
 Janus sit by the fyr, with double berd,
 And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn.
 Biforn hym stant brawen of the tusked swyn,
 And 'Nowel' crieth every lusty man. 1255
 Aurelius, in al that evere he kan,
 Dooth to his master chiere and reverence,
 And preyeth hym to doon his diligence
 To bryngen hym out of his peynes smerte,
 Or with a swerd that he wolde slitte his herte. 1260
 This subtil clerk swich routle had of this man,
 That nyght and day he spedde hym that he kan
 To wayten a tyme of his conclusioun,
 This is to seye, to maken illusioun
 By swich an apparence or jogelrye— 1265
 I ne kan no termes of astrologye—

That she and every wight sholde wene and seye
That of Britaigne the rokkes were aweye,
Or ellis they were sonken under grounde.
So atte laste he hath his tyme yfounde 1270
To maken hise japes and his wrecchednesse
Of swich a supersticious cursednesse.
Hise tables Tolletanes forth he brought,
Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakked nought,
Neither his collect ne hise expans yeeris, 1275
Ne hise rootes, ne hise othere geeris,
As been his centris and hise argumentz,
And hise proporcioneles convenientz
For hise equacions in every thyng.
And by his eighte speere in his wirkyng 1280
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above
That in the ninthe speere considered is.
Ful subtilly he kalkuled al this.
Whan he hadde founde his firste mansioun, 1285
He knew the remenaunt by proporcoun,
And knew the arisyng of his moone weel,
And in whos face and terme, and everydeel;
And knew ful weel the moones mansioun
Acordaunt to his operacioun, 1290
And knew also hise othere observaunces
For swiche illusiouns and swiche meschaunces
As hethen folk useden in thilke dayes;—
For which no lenger maked he delays,
But thurgh his magik, for a wyke or tweye, 1295
It semed that alle the rokkes were aweye.
Aurelius, which that yet despeired is,
Wher he shal han his love, or fare amys,
Awaiteth nyght and day on this myracle.
And whan he knew that ther was noon obstacle, 1300
That voyded were thise rokkes everychon,

Doun to hise maistres feet he fil anon,
 And seyde, "I woful wrecche, Aurelius,
 Thanke yow, lord, and lady myn, Venus,
 That me han holpen fro my cares colde." 1305
 And to the temple his wey forth hath he holde
 Where as he knew he sholde his lady see,
 And whan he saugh his tyme, anon right hee
 With dredful herte and with ful humble cheere
 Salewed hath his sovereyn lady deere. 1310
 "My righte lady," quod this woful man,
 "Whom I moost drede and love as I best kan,
 And lothest were of al this world displese,
 Nere it that I for yow have swich disese |
 That I moste dyen heere at youre foot anon, 1315
 Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon;
 But, certes, outhere moste I dye or pleyne,
 Ye sle me giltelees for verray peyne.
 But of my deeth thogh that ye have no routhe,
 Avyseth yow er that ye breke youre trouthe. 1320
 Repenteth yow for thilke God above,
 Er ye me sleen by cause that I yow love.
 For madame, wel ye woot what ye han hight;
 Nat that I chalange any thyng of right
 Of yow, my sovereyn lady, but youre grace; 1325
 But in a gardyn yond at swich a place
 Ye woot right wel what ye bihighten me,
 And in myn hand youre trouthe plighen ye
 To love me best, God woot ye seyde so,
 Al be that I unworthy be therto. 1330
 Madame, I speke it for the honour of yow,
 Moore than to save myn hertes lyf right now.
 I have do so as ye comanded me,
 And if ye vouchesauf, ye may go see.
 Dooth as yow list, have youre biheste in mynde, 1335
 For, quyk or deed, right there ye shal me fynde.

In yow lith al, to do me lyve or deye,
But wel I woot the rokkes been aweye!"

He taketh his leve, and she astonied stood,
In al hir face nas a drope of blood. 1340

She wende nevere han come in swich a trappe.
"Allas," quod she, "that evere this sholde happe.

For wende I nevere, by possibilitee,
That swich a monstre or merveille myghte be.
It is agayns the proces of nature." 1345

And hoom she goth a sorweful creature,
For verray feere unnethe may she go. /

She wepeth, wailleth, al a day or two,
And swowneth that it routhe was to see;
But why it was, to no wight tolde shee, 1350

For out of towne was goon Arveragus.
But to himself she spak, and seyde thus,
With face pale and with ful sorweful cheere,

In hire compleynt, as ye shal after heere.
"Allas!" quod she, "on thee, Fortune, I pleyne, 1355

That unwar wrapped hast me in thy cheyne;

For which tescape woot I no socour

Save oonly deeth or elles dishonour;

Oon of thise two bihoveth me to chese.

But natheless, yet have I levere to lese 1360

My lif, than of my body have a shame,

Or knowe myselfen fals or lese my name,

And with my deth I may be quyt, ywis;

Hath ther nat many a noble wyf er this

And many a mayde yslayn himself, alas, 1365

Rather than with hir body doon trespas?

Yis, certes, lo, thise stories beren witnesse,

Whan thritty tirauntz, ful of cursednesse,

Hadde slayn Phidoun in Atthenes, at feste,

They comanded hise doghtres for tareste, 1370

And bryngen hem biforn hem in despit,

Al naked, to fulfille hir foul delit,
 And in hir fadres blood they made hem daunce
 Upon the pavement, God yeve hem myschaunce;
 For which thise woful maydens ful of drede, 1375
 Rather than they wolde lese hir maydenhede,
 They prively been stirt into a welle
 And dreynte hemselven, as the bookes telle.
 They of Mecene leete enquire and seke
 Of Lacedomye fifty maydens eke, 1380
 On whiche they wolden doon hir lecherye;
 But was ther noon of al that compaignye
 That she nas slayn, and with a good entente
 Chees rather for to dye than assente
 To been oppressed of hir maydenhede. 1385
 Why sholde I thanne to dye been in drede?
 Lo, eek the tiraunt Aristoclides,
 That loved a mayden heet Stymphalides,
 Whan that hir fader slayn was on a nyght,
 Unto Dianas temple goth she right, 1390
 And hente the ymage in hir handes two;
 Fro which ymage wolde she nevere go,
 No wight ne myghte hir handes of it arace,
 Til she was slayn right in the selve place.
 Now sith that maydens hadden swich despit, 1395
 To been defouled with mannes foul delit,
 Wel oghte a wyf rather hirselveslee,
 Than be defouled, as it thynketh me.
 What shal I seyn of Hasdrubales wyf
 That at Cartage birafte herself hir lyf? 1400
 For whan she saugh that Romayns wan the toun,
 She took hir children alle and skipte adoun
 Into the fyr, and chees rather to dye
 Than any Romayn dide hir vileynye.
 Hath nat Lucesse yslayn herself, allas, 1405
 At Rome whan that she oppressed was

Of Tarquyn, for hir thoughte it was a shame
 To lyven whan she hadde lost hir name?
 The sevene maydens of Melesie also
 Han slayn hemself, for verray drede and wo 1410
 Rather than folk of Gawle hem sholde oppresse.
 Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,
 Koude I now telle as touchynge this mateere.
 Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf so deere
 Hirselves slow, and leet hir blood to glyde 1415
 In Habradates woundes depe and wyde;
 And seyde, "My body at the leeste way
 Ther shal no wight defoulen, if I may."
 What sholde I mo ensamples heer of sayn?
 Sith that so manye han hemselves slayn, 1420
 Wel rather than they wolde defouled be,
 I wol conclude that it is bet for me
 To sleen myself, than been defouled thus.
 I wol be trewe unto Arveragus,
 Or rather sleen myself in som manere, 1425
 As dide Demociones doghter deere,
 By cause that she wolde nat defouled be.
 O Cedasus, it is ful greet pitee
 To reden how thy doghtren deyde, allas,
 That slowe hemself, for swich manere cas! 1430
 As greet a pitee was it, or wel moore,
 The Theban mayden, that for Nichanore
 Hirselves slow right for swich manere wo.
 Another Theban mayden dide right so;
 For oon of Macidonye hadde hire oppressed, 1435
 She with hire deeth hir maydenhede redressed.
 What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,
 That for swich cas birafte herself hir lyf?
 How trewe eek was to Alcebiades
 His love that rather for to dyen chees 1440
 Than for to suffre his body unburyed be.

Lo, which a wyf was Alceste," quod she,
 "What seith Omer of goode Penalopee?
 Al Grece knoweth of hire chastitee.
 Pardee of Lacedomya is writen thus, 1445
 That whan at Troie was slayn Protheselaus,
 No lenger wolde she lyve after his day.
 The same of noble Porcia telle I may,
 Withoute Brutus koude she nat lyve,
 To whom she hadde al hool hir herte yeve. 1450
 The parfit wyfhod of Arthemesie
 Honured is thurgh al the Barbarie.
 O Teuta queene, thy wyfly chastitee
 To alle wyves may a mirour bee!
 The same thyng I seye of Bilyea, 1455
 Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria."
 Thus pleynd Dorigene a day or tweye,
 Purposynge evere that she wolde deye.
 But nathelees, upon the thridde nyght
 Hoom cam Arveragus, this worthy knyght, 1460
 And asked hir why that she weep so soore.
 And she gan wepen ever lenger the moore.
 "Allas!" quod she, "that evere I was born.
 Thus have I seyde," quod she, "thus have I sworn;"
 And toold hym al as ye han herd bifore, 1465
 It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore. *conversee*
 This housbonde with glad chiere in freendly wyse
 Answerde and seyde, as I shal yow devyse,
 "Is ther oght elles, Dorigen, but this?"
 "Nay, nay," quod she, "God helpe me so, as wys, 1470
 This is to muche, and it were Goddes wille."
 "Ye, wyf," quod he, "lat slepen that is stille.
 It may be wel paraventure yet to-day.
 Ye shul youre trouthe holden, by my fay.
 For God so wisly have mercy upon me, 1475
 I hadde wel levere ystiked for to be

For verray love which that I to yow have,
 But if ye sholde your trouthe kepe and save.
 Trouthe is the hyeste thyng that man may kepe."
 But with that word he brast anon to wepe 1480
 And seyde, "I yow forbede, up peyne of deeth,
 That nevere whil thee lasteth lyf ne breeth,
 To no wight telle thou of this aventure;
 As I may best, I wol my wo endure.
 Ne make no contenance of hevynesse, 1485
 That folk of yow may demen harm or gesse."
 And forth he cleped a squier and a mayde;
 "Gooth forth anon with Dorigen," he sayde,
 "And bryngeth hir to swich a place anon,"
 They take hir leve, and on hir wey they gon, 1490
 But they ne wiste why she thider wente,
 He nolde no wight tellen his entente.
 Paraventure, an heep of yow, ywis,
 Wol holden hym a lewed man in this,
 That he wol putte his wyf in jupartie. 1495
 Herkneth the tale er ye upon hire crie;
 She may have bettre fortune than yow semeth,
 And whan that ye han herd the tale, demeth.
 This squier, which that highte Aurelius,
 On Dorigen that was so amorus, 1500
 Of aventure happed hir to meete
 Amydde the toun, right in the quykkest strete,
 As she was bown to goon the wey forth-right
 Toward the gardyn, ther as she had hight.
 And he was to the gardynward also, 1505
 For wel he spyed whan she wolde go
 Out of hir hous to any maner place.
 But thus they mette, of aventure or grace
 And he saleweth hir with glad entente,
 And asked of hir whiderward she wente. 1510
 And she answerde, half as she were mad,

"Unto the gardyn as myn housbonde bad,
 My trouthe for to holde, alas! alas!"
 Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,
 And in his herte hadde greet compassioun 1515
 Of hir and of hir lamentacioun,
 And of Arveragus, the worthy knyght,
 That bad hire holden al that she had hight,
 So looth hym was his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe;
 And in his herte he caughte of this greet routhe, 1520
 Considerynge the beste on every syde
 That fro his lust yet were hym levere abyde
 Than doon so heigh a cherlyssh wrecchednesse
 Agayns franchise and alle gentillesse.—
 For which in fewe wordes seyde he thus: 1525
 "Madame, seyeth to your lord Arveragus,
 That sith I se his grete gentillesse
 To yow, and eek I se wel youre distresse,
 That him were levere han shame—and that were routhe—
 Than ye to me sholde breke thus youre trouthe, 1530
 I have wel levere evere to suffre wo
 Than I departe the love bitwix yow two.
 I yow relese, madame, into youre hond
 Quyt every surement and every bond,
 That ye han maad to me as heer biforn, 1535
 Sith thilke tyme which that ye were born.
 My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never repreve
 Of no biheste, and heere I take my leve,
 As of the treweste and the beste wyf
 That evere yet I knew in al my lyf. 1540
 But every wyf be war of hir biheeste,
 On Dorigene remembreth atte leeste!
 Thus kan a squier doon a gentil dede
 As wel as kan a knyght, withouten drede."
 She thonketh hym upon hir knees al bare, 1545
 And hoom unto hir housbonde is she fare,
 And tolde hym al, as ye han herd me sayd;

And be ye siker, he was so weel apayd
 That it were impossible me to wryte.
 What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte? 1550
 Arveragus and Dorigene his wyf
 In sovereyn blisse leden forth hir lyf,
 Nevere eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene.
 He cherisseth hir as though she were a queene,
 And she was to hym trewe for everemoore.— 1555
 Of thise two folk ye gete of me namoore.
 Aurelius, that his cost hath al forlorn
 Curseth the tyme that evere he was born.
 “Allas,” quod he, “allas, that I bihighte
 Of pured gold a thousand pound of wighte 1560
 Unto this philosophre! how shal I do?
 I se namoore but that I am fordo;
 Myn heritage moot I nedes selle
 And been a beggere; heere may I nat dwelle,
 And shamen al my kynrede in this place, 1565
 But I of hym may gete bettre grace.
 But nathelees I wole of hym assaye
 At certeyn dayes yeer by yeer to paye,
 And thanke hym of his grete curteisye;
 My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol nat lye.” 1570
 With herte soor he gooth unto his cofre,
 And broghte gold unto this philosophre
 The value of fyve hundred pound, I gesse,
 And hym bisecheth of his gentillesse
 To graunte hym dayes of the remenaunt, 1575
 And seyde, “Maister, I dar wel make avaunt,
 I failed nevere of my trouthe as yit.
 For sikerly my dette shal be quyt
 Towardes yow, how evere that I fare,
 To goon a begged in my kirtle bare! 1580
 But wolde ye vouche sauf upon seuretee
 Two yeer or thre, for to respiten me,

Thanne were I wel, for elles moot I selle
 Myn heritage, ther is namoore to telle."
 This philosophre sobrelly answerde, 1585
 And seyde thus, whan he thise wordes herde,
 "Have I nat holden covenant unto thee?"
 "Yes, certes, wel and trewely," quod he.
 "Hastow nat had thy lady, as thee liketh?"
 "No, no," quod he, and sorwefully he siketh. 1590
 "What was the cause, tel me if thou kan?"
 Aurelius his tale anon bigan,
 And tolde hym al, as ye han herd bifoore,
 It nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore.
 He seide, Arveragus of gentillesse 1595
 Hadde levere dye in sorwe and in distresse
 Than that his wyf were of hir trouthe fals;
 The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde hym als,
 How looth hir was to been a wikked wyf,
 And that she levere had lost that day hir lyf, 1600
 And that hir trouthe she swoor, thurgh innocence,
 She nevere erst hadde herd speke of apparence.
 "That made me han of hir so greet pitee;
 And right as frely as he sente hir me,
 As frely sente I hir to hym ageyn. 1605
 This al and som, ther is namoore to seyn."
 This philosophre answerde, "Leeve brother,
 Everich of yow dide gentilly til oother.
 Thou art a squier, and he is a knyght;
 But God forbede, for his blisful myght, 1610
 But if a clerk koude doon a gentil dede
 As wel as any of yow, it is no drede.
 Sire, I releesse thee thy thousand pound,
 As thou right now were copen out of the ground,
 Ne nevere er now ne haddest knowen me; 1615
 For, sire, I wol nat taken a peny of thee
 For al my craft, ne noght for my travaille.
 Thou hast ypayed wel for my vitaille,

It is ynogh, and farewel, have good day."

And took his hors, and forth he goth his way.

1620

Lordynges, this questioun wolde I aske now,

Which was the mooste fre, as thynketh yow?

Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende,

I kan namoore, my tale is at an ende.

1621 thanne wolde.

Heere is ended the Frankeleyns tale.

GROUP G.

THE SECONDE NONNES TALE

The Prologe of the Seconde Nonnes Tale.

The minstre and the norice unto vices,
Which that men clepe in Englissh ydelnesse,
That porter of the gate is of delices,
To eschue, and by hir contrarie hir oppresse,
(That is to seyn by leueful bisynesse), 5
Wel oghten we to doon al oure entente,
Lest that the feend thurgh ydelnesse us shente.

For he, that with hise thousand cordes slye
Continuelly us waiteth to biclappe,
Whan he may man in ydelnesse espye, 10
He kan so lightly cacche hym in his trappe,
Til that a man be hent right by the lappe,
He nys nat war the feend hath hym in honde.
Wel oghte us werche, and ydelnesse withstonde.

And though men dradden nevere for to dye, 15
Yet seen men wel by resoun, doutelees,
That ydelnesse is roten slogardye,
Of which ther nevere comth no good encrees;
And seen that slouthe hir holdeth in a lees,
Oonly to slepe, and for to ete and drynke, 20
And to devouren al that othere swynke.

And for to putte us fro swich ydelnesse,
That cause is of so greet confusioun,
I have heer doon my feithful bisynesse,

After the legende, in translacioun 25
Right of thy glorious lif and passioun,
Thou with thy gerland wroght with rose and lilie,
Thee meene I, mayde and martir, seint Cecilie.

Invocacio ad Mariam.

And thow that flour of virgines art alle,
Of whom that Bernard list so wel to write, 30
To thee at my bigynnyng first I calle,
Thou confort of us wrecches, do me endite
Thy maydens deeth, that wan thurgh hir merite
The eterneel lyf, and of the feend victorie,
As man may after reden in hir storie. 35

Thow mayde and mooder, doghter of thy sone,
Thow welle of mercy, synful soules cure,
In whom that God for bountee chees to wone,
Thow humble and heigh, over every creature
Thow nobledest so ferforth oure nature, 40
That no desdeyn the makere hadde of kynde,
His sone in blood and flessch to clothe and wynde.

Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy sydis
Took mannes shape the eterneel love and pees,
That of the tryne compas lord and gyde is, 45
Whom erthe and see and hevene out of relees
Ay heryen, and thou, virgine wemmelees,
Baar of thy body, and dweltest mayden pure,
The creatour of every creature.

Assembled is in thee magnificence 50
With mercy, goodnesse, and with swich pitee
That thou, that art the sonne of excellence,
Nat oonly helpst hem that preyen thee,

But oftentyme, of thy benygnytee,
 Ful frely, er that men thyn help biseche, 55
 Thou goost biforn, and art hir lyves leche.

Now help, thow meeke and blisful faire mayde,
 Me, flemed wrecche in this desert of galle;
 Thynk on the womman Cananee, that sayde
 That whelpes eten somme of the crommes alle, 60
 That from hir lordes table been yfalle,
 And though that I, unworthy sone¹ of Eve,
 Be synful, yet accepte my bileve.

And for that feith is deed withouten werkis,
 So for to werken yif me wit and space, 65
 That I be quit fro thennes that moost derk is.
 O thou, that art so fair and ful of grace,
 Be myn advocat in that heighe place
 Ther as withouten ende is songe Osanne,
 Thow Cristes mooder, doghter deere of Anne! 70

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte,
 That troubled is by the contagioun
 Of my body, and also by the wighte
 Of erthely lust and fals affeccioun,
 O havene of refut, O salvacioun 75
 Of hem that been in sorwe and in distresse,
 Now help, for to my werk I wol me dresse.

Yet preye I yow that reden that I write,
 Foryeve me, that I do no diligence
 This ilke storie subtilly to endite, 80
 For bothe have I the wordes and sentence
 Of hym that at the seintes reverence
 The storie wroot, and folwe hir legende.
 I pray yow, that ye wole my werk amende.

cf. Glossary.

83 folwen.

First wolde I yow the name of seinte Cecile 85
 Expowne, as men may in hir storie see.
 It is to seye in Englissh, 'hevenes lilie'
 For pure chaastnesse of virginitee,
 Or for she whitnesse hadde of honestee
 And grene of conscience, and of good fame 90
 The soote savour, lilie was hir name.

Interpretacio nom-
 inis Cecilie quam
 ponit frater Jaco-
 bus Januensis in
 legendo

Or Cecilie is to seye, 'the wey to blynde,'
 For she ensample was by good techynge;
 Or elles, Cecile, as I writen fynde
 Is joyned by a manere conjoynynge 95
 Of 'hevene' and 'lia,' and heere in figurynge
 The 'hevene' is set for thoght of hoolynesse,
 And 'lia' for hir lastynge bisynesse.

Cecile may eek be seyde, in this manere,
 'Wantynge of blyndnesse,' for hir grete light 100
 Of sapience, and for hire thewes cleere
 Or elles, loo, this maydens name bright
 Of 'hevene' and 'leos' comth, for which by right
 Men myghte hir wel 'the hevene of peple' calle,
 Ensamle of goode and wise werkes alle. 105

For 'leos' 'peple' in Englissh is to seye,
 And right as men may in the hevene see
 The sonne and moone and sterres every weye,
 Right so men goostly, in this mayden free,
 Syen of feith the magnanymytee, 110
 And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,
 And sondry werkes, brighte of excellence.

And right so as thise philosophres write
 That hevene is swift and round and eek brennynge,
 Right so was faire Cecilie the white 115
 Ful swift and bisy evere in good werkynge,

And round and hool in good perseverynge,
 And brennyng evere in charite ful brighte.
 Now have I yow declared what she highte.

*Here bigynneth the Seconde Nonnes tale of the lyf of
 Seinte Cecile.*

This mayden, bright Cecilie, as hir lif seith, 120
 Was comen of Romayns, and of noble kynde,
 And from hir cradel up fostred in the feith
 Of Crist, and bar his gospel in hir mynde.
 She nevere cessed, as I writen fynde,
 Of hir preyere, and God to love and drede, 125
 Bisekyng hym to kepe hir maydenhede.

And whan this mayden sholde unto a man
 Ywedded be, that was ful yong of age,
 Which that ycleped was Valerian,
 And day was comen of hir marriage, 130
 She, ful devout and humble in hir corage,
 Under hir robe of gold, that sat ful faire,
 Hadde next hir flessch yclad hir in an haire.

And whil the orgnes maden melodie,
 To God allone in herte thus sang she: 135
 "O Lord, my soule and eek my body gye
 Unwemmed, lest that I confounded be."
 And for his love that dyde upon a tree,
 Every seconde and thridde day she faste,
 Ay biddynge in hir orisons ful faste. 140

The nyght cam, and to bedde moste she gon
 With hir housbonde, as ofte is the manere,
 And pryvely to hym she seyde anon,
 "O sweete and wel biloved spouse deere,

Ther is a conseil, and ye wolde it heere, 145
Which that right fayn I wolde unto yow seye,
So that ye swere ye shul me nat biwreye."

Valerian gan faste unto hire swere
That for no cas, ne thyng that myghte be,
He sholde nevere mo biwreyen here, 150
And thanne at erst to hym thus seyde she,
"I have an Aungel which that loveth me,
That with greet love, wher so I wake or sleepe,
Is redy ay my body for to kepe.

And if that he may feelen out of drede 155
That ye me touche, or love in vileynye,
He right anon wol sle yow with the dede,
And in youre yowthe thus ye sholden dye.
And if that ye in clene love me gye,
He wol yow loven as me for youre clennesses, 160
And shewen yow his joye and his brightnesse."

Valerian, corrected as God wolde,
Answerde agayn, "If I shal trusten thee,
Lat me that aungel se, and hym biholde,
And if that it a verray angel bee, 165
Thanne wol I doon as thou hast prayed me;
And if thou love another man, forsothe
Right with this swerd thanne wol I sle yow bothe."

Cecile answerde anon right in this wise,
"If that yow list, the angel shul ye see, 170
So that ye trowe in Crist, and yow baptize.
Gooth forth to Via Apia," quod shee,
"That fro this toun ne stant but miles three;
And to the povre folkes that ther dwelle
Sey hem right thus as that I shal yow telle. 175

Telle hem, that I Cecile yow to hem sente,
 To shewen yow the goode Urban the olde,
 For secree thynges and for good entente;
 And whan that ye Seint Urban han biholde,
 Telle hym the wordes whiche that I to yow tolde, 180
 And whan that he hath purged yow fro synne,
 Thanne shul ye se that angel er ye twynne."

Valerian is to the place ygon,
 And right as hym was taught by his lernynge,
 He foond this hooly olde Urban anon 185
 Among the seintes buryeles lotynge.
 And he anon, withouten tariynge,
 Dide his message, and whan that he it tolde,
 Urban for joye his handes gan up holde.

The teeris from hise eyen leet he falle. 190
 "Almyghty lord, O Jesu Crist," quod he,
 "Sower of chaast conseil, hierde of us alle,
 The fruyt of thilke seed of chastitee
 That thou hast sowe in Cecile, taak to thee.
 Lo, lyk a bisy bee, withouten gile, 195
 Thee serveth ay thyn owene thral Cecile!

For thilke spouse that she took but now
 Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth heere
 As meke as evere was any lomb, to yow."
 And with that word anon ther gan appeere 200
 An oold man clad in white clothes cleere,
 That hadde a book with lettre of gold in honde,
 And gan bifore Valerian to stonde.

Valerian as deed fil doun for drede
 Whan he hym saugh, and he up hente hym tho, 205
 And on his book right thus he gan to rede,

"O lord, o feith, o god, withouten mo,
 O Cristendom, and fader of alle also,
 Aboven alle, and over alle, everywhere.—"
 Thise wordes al with gold ywriten were. 210

Whan this was rad, thanne seyde this olde man,
 "Leevestow this thyng or no? sey ye or nay?"
 "I leeve al this thyng," quod Valerian,
 "For oother thyng than this, I dar wel say,
 Under the hevene no wight thynke may." 215
 Tho varyssed this olde man, he nyste where;
 And Pope Urban hym cristned right there.

Valerian gooth hoom, and fynt Cecilie
 Withinne his chambre with an angel stonde.
 This angel hadde of roses and of lilie 220
 Corones two, the whiche he bar in honde;
 And first to Cecile, as I understonde,
 He yaf that oon, and after gan he take
 That oother to Valerian hir make.

"With body clene and with unwemmed thoght 225
 Kepeth ay wel thise corones," quod he,
 "Fro Paradys to yow have I hem broght,
 Ne nevere mo ne shal they roten bee,
 Ne lese hir soote savour, trusteth me,
 Ne nevere wight shal seen hem with his eye 230
 But he be chaast and hate vileynye.

And thow Valerian, for thow so soone
 Assentedest to good conseil also,
 Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han thy boone."
 "I have a brother," quod Valerian tho, 235
 "That in this world I love no man so.
 I pray yow that my brother may han grace,
 To knowe the trouthe, as I do in this place."

The angel seyde, "God liketh thy requeste,
And bothe with the palm of martirdom 240
Ye shullen come unto his blisful feste."

And with that word Tiburce his brother coom;
And whan that he the savour undernoom,
Which that the roses and the lilies caste,
Withinne his herte he gan to wondre faste, 245

And seyde, "I wondre, this tyme of the yeer,
Whennes that soote savour cometh so
Of rose and lilies that I smelle heer.
For though I hadde hem in myne handes two,
The savour myghte in me no depper go, 250
The sweete smel that in myn herte I fynde
Hath chaunged me al in another kynde."

Valerian seyde, "Two corones han we,
Snow-white and rose-reed that shynen cleere,
Whiche that thyne eyen han no myght to see, 255
And as thou smellest hem thurgh my preyere,
So shaltow seen hem, leeve brother deere,
If it so be thou wolt, withouten slouthe,
Bileve aright and knowen verray trouthe."

Tiburce answerde, "Seistow this to me? 260
In soothnesse or in dreem I herkne this?"
"In dremes," quod Valerian, "han we be
Unto this tyme, brother myn, ywis;
But now at erst in trouthe oure dwellyng is."
"How woostow this," quod Tiburce, "in what wyse?" 265
Quod Valerian, "That shal I thee devyse.

The aungel of God hath me the trouthe ytaught
Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wolt reneye
The ydoles and be clene, and elles naught."
And of the myracle of thise corones tweye 270

Seint Ambrose in his preface list to seye.
 Solempnely this noble doctour deere
 Commendeth it, and seith in this manere;

The palm of martirdom for to receyve
 Seinte Cecile, fulfild of Goddes yifte, 275
 The world and eek hire chambre gan she weyve,
 Witnesse Tyburces and Valerians shrifte,
 To whiche God of his bountee wolde shifte
 Corones two, of floures wel smellynge,
 And made his angel hem the corones brynge. 280

The mayde hath broght thise men to blisse above;
 The world hath wist what it is worth, certeyn,
 Devocion of chastitee to love. . . .
 Tho shewed hym Cecile, al open and pleyn,
 That alle ydoles nys but a thyng in veyn, 285
 For they been dombe and therto they been deve,
 And charged hym hise ydoles for to leve.

"Whoso that troweth nat this, a beest he is,"
 Quod tho Tiburce, "if that I shal nat lye."
 And she gan kisse his brest, that herde this, 290
 And was ful glad he koude trouthe espye.
 "This day I take thee for myn allye,"
 Seyde this blisful faire mayde deere,
 And after that she seyde as ye may heere.

"Lo, right so as the love of Crist," quod she, 295
 "Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in that wise
 Anon for myn allye heer take I thee,
 Syn that thou wolt thyne ydoles despise.
 Go with thy brother now, and thee baptise,
 And make thee clene, so that thou mowe biholde 300
 The angesles face of which thy brother tolde."

Tiburce answerde and seyde, "Brother deere,
 First tel me whider I shal, and to what man?"
 "To whom?" quod he, "com forth with right good cheere,
 I wol thee lede unto the Pope Urban." 305
 "Til Urban? brother myn Valerian,"
 Quod tho Tiburce, "woltow me thider lede?
 Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede."

"Ne menestow nat Urban," quod he tho,
 "That is so ofte dampned to be deed, 310
 And woneth in halkes alwey to and fro,
 And dar nat ones putte forth his heed;
 Men sholde hym brennen in a fyr so reed,
 If he were founde, or that men myghte hym spyre;
 And we also, to bere hym compaignye, 315

And whil we seken thilke divinitee,
 That is yhid in hevene pryvely,
 Algate ybrend in this world shul we be!"
 To whom Cecile answerde boldly,
 "Men myghten dreden wel and skilfully 320
 This lyf to lese, myn owene deere brother,
 If this were lyvyng oonly and noon oother.

But ther is bettre lif in oother place,
 That nevere shal be lost, ne drede thee noght,
 Which Goddes sone us tolde thurgh his grace. 325
 That fadres sone hath alle thyng ywroght,
 And al that wroght is with a skilful thoght,
 The goost, that fro the fader gan procede,
 Hath sowled hem, withouten any drede.

By word and by myracle Goddes Sone, 330
 Whan he was in this world, declared heere
 That ther was oother lyf ther men may wone."

To whom answerde Tiburce, "O suster deere,
Ne seydestow right now in this manere,
Ther nys but o God, lord in soothfastnesse, 335
And now of three how maystow bere witesse?"

"That shal I telle," quod she, "er I go.
Right as a man hath sapiences three,
Memorie, engyn, and intellect also,
So, in o beynge of divinitee 340
Thre persones may ther right wel bee."
Tho gan she hym ful bisily to preche
Of Cristes come, and of hise peynes teche,

And many pointes of his passioun;
How Goddes sone in this world was withholde 345
To doon mankynde pleyn remissioun,
That was ybounde in synne and cares colde . . .
Al this thyng she unto Tiburce tolde;
And after this, Tiburce in good entente
With Valerian to Pope Urban he wente; 350

That thanked God, and with glad herte and light
He cristned hym, and made hym in that place
Parfit in his lernynge, Goddes knyght.
And after this Tiburce gat swich grace
That every day he saugh in tyme and space 355
The aungel of God, and every maner boone
That he God axed, it was sped ful soone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn
How manye wondres Jesus for hem wroghte.
But atte laste, to tellen short and pleyn, 360
The sergeantz of the toun of Rome hem soghte,
And hem biforn Almache the Prefect broghte,
Which hem opposed, and knew al hire entente,
And to the ymage of Juppiter hem sente,

And seyde, "Whoso wol nat sacrifice, 365
 Swap of his heed, this my sentence heer."
 Anon thise martirs that I yow devyse,
 Oon Maximus, that was an officer
 Of the prefectes, and his corniculer,
 Hem hente, and whan he forth the seintes ladde, 370
 Hymself he weepe, for pitee that he hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintes loore,
 He gat hym of the tormentoures leve,
 And ladde hem to his hous withoute moore.
 And with hir prechyng, er that it were eve, 375
 They gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,
 And fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone
 The false feith, to trowe in God allone.

Cecile cam whan it was woxen nyght,
 With preestes that hem cristned alle yfeere, 380
 And afterward, whan day was woxen light,
 Cecile hem seyde, with a ful stedefast cheere,
 "Now Cristes owene knyghtes, leeve and deere,
 Cast alle away the werkes of derknesse
 And armeth yow in armure of brightnesse. 385

Ye han forsothe ydoon a greet bataille,
 Youre cours is doon, youre feith han ye conserved,
 Gooth to the corone of lif that may nat faille.
 The rightful juge which that ye han served
 Shal yeve it yow as ye han it deserved." 390
 And whan this thyng was seyde as I devyse,
 Men ledde hem forth to doon the sacrefise.

But whan they weren to the place broght,
 To tellen shortly the conclusioun,
 They nolde encense ne sacrifice right noght, 395

But on hir knees they setten hem adoun
 With humble herte and sad devocioun,
 And losten bothe hir hevedes in the place.
 Hir soules wenten to the kyng of grace.

This Maximus that saugh this thyng bityde, 400
 With pitous teeris tolde it anon-right,
 That he hir soules saugh to hevene glyde,
 With aungels ful of cleernesse and of light;
 And with this word converted many a wight.
 For which Almachius dide hym so bete 405
 With whippe of leed, til he the lif gan lete.

Cecile hym took, and buryed hym anon
 By Tiburce and Valerian softly,
 Withinne hir buryng place under the stoon,
 And after this Almachius hastily 410
 Bad hise ministres fecchen openly
 Cecile, so that she myghte in his presence
 Doon sacrifice, and Juppiter encense.

But they, converted at hir wise loore,
 Wepten ful soore, and yaven ful credence 415
 Unto hire word, and cryden moore and moore,
 "Crist, Goddes sone, withouten difference,
 Is verray God, this is al oure sentence,
 That hath so good a servant hym to serve
 This with o voys we trowen, thogh we sterve." 420

Almachius, that herde of this doynge,
 Bad fecchen Cecile, that he myghte hir see,
 And alderfirst, lo, this was his axynge:
 "What maner womman artow?" tho quod he.
 "I am a gentil womman born," quod she. 425
 "I axe thee," quod he, "though it thee greeve,
 Of thy religioun and of thy bileeve."

"Ye han bigonne youre question folily,"
 Quod she, "that wolden two answeres conclude
 In o demande; ye axed lewedly." 430

Almache answerde unto that similitude,
 "Of whennes comth thyn answeyng so rude?"
 "Of whennes?" quod she, whan that she was freyned,
 "Of conscience and of good feith unfeyned."

Almachius seyde, "Ne takestow noon heede 435
 Of my power?" and she answerde hym,
 "Youre myght," quod she, "ful litel is to dreede,
 For every mortal mannes power nys
 But lyke a bladdre ful of wynd, ywys;
 For with a nedles poynt, whan it is blowe, 440
 May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe."

"Ful wrongfully bigonne thow," quod he,
 "And yet in wrong is thy perseveraunce;
 Wostow nat how oure myghty princes free
 Han thus comanded and maad ordinaunce 445
 That every cristen wight shal han penaunce,
 But if that he his cristendom withseye—
 And goon al quit, if he wole it reneye?"

"Yowre princes erren, as youre nobleye dooth,"
 Quod tho Cecile, "and with a wood sentence 450
 Ye make us gilty, and it is nat sooth,
 For ye, that knowen wel oure innocence,
 For as muche as we doon a reverence
 To Crist, and for we bere a cristen name,
 Ye putte on us a cryme, and eek a blame. 455

But we that knowen thilke name so
 For vertuous, we may it nat withseye."
 Almache answerde, "Chees oon of thise two,
 Do sacrifice, or cristendom reneye,

That thou mowe now escapen by that weye." 460

At wiche the hooly blisful faire mayde

Gan for to laughe, and to the juge sayde,

"O Juge, confus in thy nycetee,

Woltow that I reneye innocence,

To make me a wikked wight," quod shee; 465

"Lo, he dissymuleth heere in audience,

He stareth, and woodeth in his advertence."

To whom Almachius, "Unsely wrecche,

Ne woostow nat how far my myght may strecche?

Han noght oure myghty princes to me yeven 470

Ye, bothe power and auctoritee

To maken folk to dyen or to lyven?

Why spekestow so proudly thanne to me?"

"I speke noght but stedfastly," quod she,

"Nat proudly, for I speke as for my syde, 475

We haten deedly thilke vice of pryde.

And if thou drede nat a sooth to heere,

Thanne wol I shewe al openly by right

That thou hast maad a ful gret lesyng heere,

Thou seyst, thy princes han thee yeven myght 480

Bothe for to sleen, and for to quyken a wight.

Thou that ne mayst but oonly lyf bireve,

Thou hast noon oother power, ne no leve!

But thou mayst seyn thy princes han thee maked

Ministre of deeth, for if thou speke of mo, 485

Thou lyest, for thy power is ful naked."

"Do wey thy booldnesse," seyde Almachius tho,

"And sacrifie to oure goddes er thou go.

I recche nat what wrong that thou me profre,

For I can suffre it as a philosophre. 490

But thilke wronges may I nat endure
 That thou spekest of oure goddes heere," quod he.
 Cecile answerde, "O nyce creature,
 Thou seydest no word, syn thou spak to me,
 That I ne knew therwith thy nycetee, 495
 And that thou were in every maner wise
 A lewed officer and a veyn justise.

Ther lakketh no thyng to thyne outter eyen
 That thou nart blynd, for thyng that we seen alle
 That it is stoon, that men may wel espyen, 500
 That ilke stoon a god thow wolt it calle.
 I rede thee lat thyn hand upon it falle,
 And taste it wel, and stoon thou shalt it fynde,
 Syn that thou seest nat with thyne eyen blynde.

It is a shame that the peple shal 505
 So scorne thee, and laughe at thy folye,
 For comunly men woot it wel overal
 That myghty God is in hise hevenes hye,
 And thise ymages, wel thou mayst espye,
 To thee ne to himself mowen noght profite, 510
 For in effect they been nat worth a myte."

Thise wordes and swiche othere seyde she,
 And he weex wrooth, and bad men sholde hir lede
 Hom til hir hous, and "in hire hous," quod he,
 "Brenne hire right in a bath of flambes rede." 515
 And as he bad, right so was doon in dede,
 For in a bath they gonne hire faste shetten,
 And nyght and day greet fyre they underbetten.

The longe nyght and eek a day also
 For al the fyr and eek the bathes heete 520
 She sat al coold, and feeled no wo;
 It made hir nat a drope for to sweete.

But in that bath hir lyf she moste lete,
 For he Almachius, with a ful wikke entente,
 To sleen hir in the bath his sonde sente. 525

Thre strokes in the nekke he smoot hir tho,
 The tormentour, but for no maner chaunce
 He myghte noght smyte al hir nekke atwo.
 And for ther was that tyme an ordinaunce
 That no man sholde doon men swich penaunce 530
 The ferthe strook to smyten, softe or soore,
 This tormentour ne dorste do namoore.

But half deed, with hir nekke ycorven there,
 He lefte hir lye, and on his wey is went.
 The cristen folk, which that aboute hir were, 535
 With sheetes han the blood ful faire yhent.
 Thre dayes lyved she in this torment,
 And nevere cessed hem the feith to teche;
 That she hadde fostred, hem she gan to preche.

And hem she yaf hir moebles, and hir thyng, 540
 And to the Pope Urban bitook hem tho,
 And seyde, "I axed this at hevene kyng
 To han respit thre dayes, and namo,
 To recomende to yow er that I go
 Thise soules, lo, and that I myghte do werche 545
 Heere of myn hous perpetuelly a cherche."

Seint Urban with hise deknes prively
 This body fette, and buryed it by nyghte,
 Among hise othere seintes, honestly.
 Hir hous the chirche of seinte Cecilie highte; 550
 Seint Urban halwed it, as he wel myghte,
 In which, into this day, in noble wyse
 Men doon to Crist and to his seinte servyse.

534 is he.

PROLOGUE TO THE CHANOUNS YEMANNES TALE

The prologe of the Chanouns yemannes tale.

Whan ended was the lyf of seinte Cecile, Er we hadde riden fully fyve mile, At Boghtoun under Blee us gan atake A man, that clothed was in clothes blake, And undernethe he wered a whyt surplys. His hakeney, which that was al pomely grys, So swatte, that it wonder was to see, It semed as he had priked miles three. The hors eek that his yeman rood upon So swatte, that unnethe myghte it gon. Aboute the peytrel stood the foom ful hye, He was of fome al flekked as a pye. A male tweyfoold upon his croper lay, It semed that he caried lite array. Al light for somer rood this worthy man, And in myn herte wondren I bigan What that he was, til that I understood How that his cloke was sowed to his hood; For which, whan I hadde longe avysed me, I demed hym som Chanoun for to be. His hat heeng at his bak down by a laas, For he hadde riden moore than trot or paas; He hadde ay priked lik as he were wood. A clote-leef he hadde under his hood For swoot, and for to kepe his heed from heete. But it was joye for to seen hym swete! His forheed dropped as a stillatorie	555 560 565 570 575 580
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554 ended was toold was al. 558 whyt om. 562 hors hakeney. 569 to wondren.

Were ful of plantayne and of paritorie.
 And whan that he was come, he gan to crye,
 "God save," quod he, "this joly compaignye!
 "Faste have I priked," quod he, "for youre sake,
 By cause that I wolde yow atake, 585
 To riden in this myrie compaignye."
 His Yeman eek was ful of curteisye,
 And seyde, "Sires, now in the morwe tyde
 Out of youre hostelrie I saugh yow ryde,
 And warned heer my lord and my soverayn 590
 Which that to ryden with yow is ful fayn
 For his desport; he loveth daliaunce."
 "Freend, for thy warnyng God yeve thee good chaunce,"
 Thanne seyde oure Hoost, "for certein, it wolde seme
 Thy lord were wys, and so I may wel deme. 595
 He is ful jocunde also, dar I leye.
 Can he oght telle a myrie tale or tweye
 With which he glade may this compaignye?"
 "Who, sire, my lord? ye, ye, with-uten lye!
 He kan of murthe and eek of jolitte 600
 Nat but ynough, also, sire, trusteth me.
 And ye hym knewen as wel as do I,
 Ye wolde wondre how wel and craftily
 He koude werke, and that in sondry wise.
 He hath take on hym many a greet emprise, 605
 Which were ful hard for any that is heere
 To brynge aboute, but they of hym it leere.
 As hoonly as he rit amonges yow,
 If ye hym knewe, it wolde be for youre prow,
 Ye wolde nat forgoon his aqueyntaunce 610
 For muchel good, I dar leye in balaunce
 Al that I have in my possessioun.
 He is a man of heigh discrecioun,
 I warne yow wel, he is a passyng man."
 "Wel," quod oure Hoost, "I pray thee, tel me than, 615

Is he a clerk, or noon? telle what he is?"
 "Nay, he is gretter than a clerk, ywis,"
 Seyde this Yeman, "and in wordes fewe,
 Hoost, of his craft somewhat I wol yow shewe.
 I seye my lord kan swich subtilitee— 620
 But al his craft ye may nat wite for me,
 And somewhat helpe I yet to his wirkyng—
 That al this ground on which we been ridyng
 Til that we come to Caunterbury toun,
 He koude al clene turne it up so down 625
 And pave it al of silver and of gold."
 And whan this Yeman hadde this tale ytold
 Unto oure Hoost, he seyde, "Benedicitee,
 This thyng is wonder merveillous to me,
 Syn that thy lord is of so heigh prudence, 630
 By cause of which men sholde hym reverence,
 That of his worship rekketh he so lite.
 His overslope nys nat worth a myte
 As in effect to hym, so moot I go.
 It is al baudy and to-tore also, 635
 Why is thy lord so sluttish, I the preye,
 And is of power bettre clooth to beye,
 If that his dede accorde with thy speche?
 Telle me that, and that I thee biseche."
 "Why," quod this Yeman, "wherto axe ye me? 640
 God help me so, for he shal nevere thee!
 But I wol nat avowe that I seye,
 And therfore keepe it secree, I yow preye;
 He is to wys, in feith, as I bileeve!
 That that is overdoon, it wol nat preeve 645
 Aright; as clerkes seyn, it is a vice.
 Wherefore in that I holde hym lewed and nyce;
 For whan a man hath over-greet a wit,
 Ful oft hym happeth to mysusen it.
 So dooth my lord, and that me greveth soore. 650
 God it amende, I kan sey yow namoore."

"Therof no fors, good Yeman," quod oure Hoost,
 "Syn of the konnyng of thy lord thow woost,
 Telle how he dooth, I pray thee hertely,
 Syn that he is so crafty and so sly. 655
 Where dwelle ye, if it to telle be?"
 "In the suburbes of a toun," quod he,
 "Lurkyng in hernes and in lanes blynde,
 Where as thise robbours and thise theves by kynde
 Holden hir pryvee fereful residence, 660
 As they that dar nat shewen hir presence.
 So faren we if I shal seye the sothe."
 "Now," quod oure Hoost, "yit lat me talke to the,
 Why artow so discoloured of thy face?"
 "Peter," quod he, "God yeve it harde grace, 665
 I am so used in the fyr to blowe,
 That it hath chaunged my colour, I trowe.
 I am nat wont in no mirour to prie,
 But swynke soore, and lerne multiplie.
 We blondren evere, and pouren in the fir, 670
 And, for al that, we faille of oure desir.
 For evere we lakke of oure conclusioun;
 To muchel folk we doon illusioun,
 And borwe gold, be it a pound or two,
 Or ten, or twelve, or manye sommes mo, 675
 And make hem wenen at the leeste weye
 That of a pound we koude make tweye.
 Yet is it fals, but ay we han good hope
 It for to doon, and after it we grope.
 But that science is so fer us biforn, 680
 We mowen nat, although we hadden sworn,
 It over-take, it slit away so faste.
 It wole us maken beggers atte laste."
 Whil this yeman was thus in his talkyng,
 This Chanoun drough hym neer, and herde al thyng 685
 Which this Yeman spak, for suspecioun

Of mennes speche evere hadde this Chanoun.
 For Catoun seith, that he that gilty is
 Demeth alle thyng be spoke of hym, ywis.
 That was the cause he gan so ny hym drawe 690
 To his yeman, to herkennen al his sawe.
 And thus he seyde unto his yeman tho,
 "Hoold thou thy pees, and spek nõ wordes mo,
 For if thou do, thou shalt it deere abyde.
 Thou sclaudrest me heere in this compaignye, 695
 And eek discoverest that thou sholdest hyde."
 "Ye," quod our Hoost, "telle on, what so bityde,
 Of al his thretyng rekke nat a myte."
 "In feith," quod he, "namoore I do but lyte."
 And whan this Chanoun saugh it wolde nat bee, 700
 But his Yeman wolde telle his pryvetee,
 He fledde away for verray sorwe and shame.
 "A!" quod the Yeman, "heere shal arise game.
 Al that I kan, anon now wol I telle,
 Syn he is goon, the foule feend hym quelle! 705
 For nevere heer after wol I with hym meete,
 For peny ne for pound, I yow biheete.
 He that me broghte first unto that game,
 Er that he dye, sorwe have he and shame.
 For it is ernest to me, by my feith, 710
 That feele I wel, what so any man seith.
 And yet, for al my smert and al my grief,
 For al my sorwe, labour, and meschief,
 I koude nevere leve it in no wise.
 Now wolde God, my wit myghte suffise 715
 To tellen al that longeth to that art,
 And nathelees yow wol I tellen part.
 Syn that my lord is goon, I wol nat spare,
 Swich thyng as that I knowe, I wol declare.

Heere endeth the prologe of the Chanouns yemannes tale.

THE TALE.

[After a lengthy account of the practice of alchemy by his master, the yeoman tells how a priest is beguiled of his money by a certain canon through trickery of a hollow rod.]

GROUP H.

PROLOGUE TO THE MAUNCIPLES TALE

Heere folweth the Prologe of the Maunciples tale.

Woot ye nat where ther stant a litel toun,
Which that ycleped is Bobbe-up-and-doun
Under the Blee, in Caunterbury weye?
Ther gan oure Hooste for to jape and pleye,
And seyde, "Sires, what, Dun is in the Myre! 5
Is ther no man for preyere ne for hyre,
That wole awake oure felawe al bihynde?
A theef myghte hym ful lightly robbe and bynde.
See how he nappeth, see how for Cokkes bones,
That he wol falle fro his hors atones. 10
Is that a Cook of London, with meschaunce?
Do hym come forth, he knoweth his penaunce,
For he shal telle a tale, by my fey,
Although it be nat worth a botel hey.
Awake, thou Cook," quod he, "God yeve thee sorwe, 15
What eyleth thee, to slepe by the morwe?
Hastow had fleen al nyght, or artow dronke?
Or hastow with som quene al nyght yswonke
So that thow mayst nat holden up thyn heed?"
This Cook that was ful pale, and no thyng reed, 20
Seyde to oure Hoost, "So God my soule blesse,
As ther is falle on me swich hevynesse,
Noot I nat why, that me were levere slepe
Than the beste galon wyn in Chepe."
"Wel," quod the Maunciple, "if it may doon ese 25
To thee, Sire Cook, and to no wight displese

Which that heere rideth in this compaignye,
 And that oure Hoost wole of his curteisye,
 I wol as now excuse thee of thy tale,
 For, in good feith, thy visage is ful pale. 30
 Thyne eyen daswen eek, as that me thynketh,
 And wel I woot, thy breeth ful soure stynketh.
 That sheweth wel thou art nat wel disposed,
 Of me, certeyn, thou shalt nat been yglosed.
 See how he ganeth, lo, this dronken wight! 35
 As though he wolde swolwe us anonright.
 Hoold cloos thy mouth, man, by thy fader kyn,
 The devel of helle sette his foot therin.
 Thy cursed breeth infecte wole us alle,
 Fy, stynkyng swyn! fy, foule moote thou falle! 40
 A, taketh heede, sires, of this lusty man!
 Now, sweete sire, wol ye justen atte fan?
 Therto me thynketh ye been wel yshape,
 I trowe that ye dronken han wyn-ape,
 And that is, whan men pleyen with a straw." 45
 And with this speche the Cook wax wrooth and wraw,
 And on the Manciple he gan nodde faste,
 For lakke of speche, and doun the hors hym caste,
 Where as he lay til that men up hym took;
 This was a fair chyvachee of a Cook! 50
 Allas, he nadde holde hym by his ladel!
 And er that he agayn were in his sadel
 Ther was greet showvyng bothe to and fro,
 To lifte hym up, and muchel care and wo,
 So unweeldy was this sory palled goost. 55
 And to the Manciple thanne spak oure hoost,
 "By cause drynke hath dominacioun,
 Upon this man, by my savacioun,
 I trowe he lewedly wolde telle his tale.
 For were it wyn, or oold or moysty ale, 60
 That he hath dronke, he speketh in his nose,

And fneseth faste, and eek he hath the pose.
 He hath also to do moore than ynough
 To kepen hym and his capul out of slough,
 And if he falle from his capul eftsoone, 65
 Thanne shal we alle have ynough to doone
 In lifyng up his hevy dronken cors.
 Telle on thy tale, of hym make I no fors;
 But yet, Manciple, in feith thou art to nyce,
 Thus openly repreve hym of his vice. 70
 Another day he wole peraventure
 Reclayme thee and brynge thee to lure.
 I meene he speke wole of smale thynges,
 As for to pynchen at thy rekenynges,
 That were nat honeste, if it cam to preef." 75
 "No," quod the Manciple, "that were a greet mescheef,
 So myghte he lightly brynge me in the snare;
 Yet hadde I levere payen for the mare,
 Which that he rit on, than he sholde with me stryve
 I wol nat wratthen hym, al so moot I thryve; 80
 That that I speke, I seyde it in my bourde.
 And wite ye what, I have heer in a gourde
 A draghte of wyn, ye, of a ripe grape,
 And right anon ye shul seen a good jape.
 This Cook shal drynke therof if that I may, 85
 Up payne of deeth, he wol nat seye me nay."
 And certeynly, to tellen as it was,
 Of this vessel the Cook drank faste; allas,
 What neded hym? he drank ynough biforn!
 And whan he hadde pouped in this horn, 90
 To the Manciple he took the gourde agayn,
 And of that drynke the Cook was wonder fayn,
 And thanked hym in swich wise as he koude.
 Thanne ganoure Hoost to laughen wonder loude,
 And seyde, "I se wel it is necessarie 95
 Where that we goon, that drynke we with us carie.
 For that wol turne rancour and disese

Tacord and love and many a wrong apese.

O thou Bacus, yblessed be thy name,

That so kanst turnen earnest into game!

100

Worship and thank be to thy deitee!

Of that mateere ye gete namoore of me,

Telle on thy tale, Manciple, I thee preye."

"Wel, sire," quod he, "now herkneth what I seye."

99 thou om

THE MAUNCIPLES TALE

Heere bigynneth the Maunciples tale of the Crowe.

Whan Phebus dwelled heere in this world adoun, 105
As olde bookes maken mencion,
He was the mooste lusty bachiler
In al this world, and eek the beste archer.
He slow Phitoun the serpent, as he lay
Slepyng agayn the sonne upon a day; 110
And many another noble worthy dede
He with his bowe wroghte, as men may rede.
Pleyen he koude on every mynstralcie,
And syngen, that it was a melodie
To heeren of his cleere voys the soun. 115
Certes, the kyng of Thebes, Amphion,
That with his syngyng walled that citee,
Koude nevere syngen half so wel as hee.
Therto he was the semelieste man,
That is or was sith that the world bigan. 120
What nedeth it hise fetures to discryve?
For in this world was noon so fair on lyve.
He was therwith fulfild of gentillesse,
Of honour, and of parfit worthynesse.
This Phebus that was flour of bachilrie, 125
As wel in fredom as in chivalrie,
For his desport, in signe eek of victorie
Of Phitoun, so as telleth us the storie,
Was wont to beren in his hand a bowe.
Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a crowe, 130
Which in a cage he fostred many a day,
And taughte it speken as men teche a jay.
Whit was this crowe, as is a snow-whit swan,
And countrefete the speche of every man

He koude, whan he sholde telle a tale. 135
 Therwith in al this world no nyghtyngale
 Ne koude, by an hondred thousand deel,
 Syngen so wonder myrily and weel.
 Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a wyf
 Which that he lovede moore than his lyf; 140
 And nyght and day dide evere his diligence
 Hir for to plesen and doon hire reverence.
 Save oonly, if the sothe that I shal sayn,
 Jalous he was, and wolde have kept hire fayn,
 For hym were looth byjaped for to be— 145
 And so is every wight in swich degree;
 But all in ydel, for it availleth noght.
 A good wyf that is clene of werk and thoght
 Sholde nat been kept in noon awayt, certayn.
 And trewely the labour is in vayn 150
 To kepe a shrewe, for it wol nat bee.
 This holde I for a verray nycetee,
 To spille labour for to kepe wyves,
 Thus writen olde clerkes in hir lyves.
 But now to purpos, as I first bigan: 155
 This worthy Phebus dooth al that he kan
 To plesen hir, wenyng that swich plesaunce,
 And for his manhede and his governaunce,
 That no man sholde han put hym from hire grace.
 But God it woot, ther may no man embrace 160
 As to destreyne a thyng, which that nature
 Hath natureelly set in a creature.
 Taak any bryd, and put it in a cage,
 And do al thyn entente and thy corage
 To fostre it tendrely with mete and drynke, 165
 Of alle deyntees that thou kanst bithynke;
 And keepe it al so clenly as thou may,
 Al though his cage of gold be never so gay,
 Yet hath this brid, by twenty thousand foold,

Levere in a forest that is rude and coold 170
 Goon ete wormes, and swich wrecchednesse;
 For evere this brid wol doon his bisynesse
 To escape out of his cage, whan he may.
 His libertee this brid desireth ay.
 Lat take a cat, and fostre hym wel with milk, 175
 And tendre flessch, and make his couche of silk,
 And lat hym seen a mous go by the wal,
 Anon he weyveth milk and flessch and al,
 And every deyntee that is in that hous,
 Swich appetit he hath to ete a mous. 180
 Lo, heere hath lust his dominacioun,
 And appetit fleemeth discrecioun.
 A she wolf hath also a vileyns kynde,
 The lewedeste wolf that she may fynde,
 Or leest of reputacioun wol she take, 185
 In tyme whan hir lust to han a make.
 Alle thise ensamples speke I by thise men,
 That been untrewes, and no thyng by wommen,
 For men han evere a likerous appetit
 On lower thyng to parfourne hire delit, 190
 Than on hire wyves, be they never so faire,
 Ne never so trewe, ne so debonaire.
 Flessch is so newefangel, with meschaunce,
 That we ne konne in no thyng han plesaunce
 That sowneth into vertu any while. 195
 This Phebus, which that thoghte upon no gile,
 Deceyved was, for al his jolitee;
 For under hym another hadde shee,
 A man of litel reputacioun,
 Nat worth to Phebus in comparisoun. 200
 The moore harm is, it happeth ofte so,
 Of which ther cometh muchel harm and wo.
 And so bifel, whan Phebus was absent,
 His wyf anon hath for hir lemman sent;

Hir lemman? certes, this is a knavyssh speche,
 Foryeveth it me, and that I yow biseche.
 The wise Plato seith, as ye may rede,
 "The word moot nede accorde with the dede."

205

If men shal telle proprely a thyng,
 The word moot cosyn be to the werkyng.

210

I am a boystous man, right thus seye I.

Ther nys no difference trewely.

Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree—

If of hire body dishoneste she bee—

And a povre wenche, oother than this,

215

If it so be they werke bothe amys,

But that the gentile in hire estaat above,

She shal be cleped his lady as in love,

And for that oother is a povre womman,

She shal be cleped his wenche, or his lemman;

220

And God it woot, myn owene deere brother,

Men leyn that oon as lowe as lith that oother.

Right so bitwixe a titlelees tiraunt

And an outlawe, or a thief erraunt,

The same I seye, ther is no difference.

225

To Alisaundre was toold this sentence,

That for the tirant is of gretter myght,

By force of meynee for to sleen dounright,

And brennen hous and hoom, and make al playn,

Lo, therefore is he cleped a capitayn!

230

And for the outlawe hath but smal meynee,

And may nat doon so greet an harm as he,

Ne brynge a contree to so greet mescheef,

Men clepen hym an outlawe or a thief.

But for I am a man noght textueel,

235

I wol noght telle of textes never a deel;

I wol go to my tale as I bigan.

Whan Phebus wyf had sent for hir lemman,

Anon they wroghten al hir lust volage.

The white crowe that heeng ay in the cage

240

Biheeld hire werk, and seyde never a word,
 And whan that hoom was come Phebus the lord,
 This crowe sang, "Cokkow! Cokkow! Cokkow!"
 "What, bryd!" quod Phebus, "what song syngestow?
 Ne were thou wont so myrily to synge 245
 That to myn herte it was a rejoysynge
 To heere thy voys? allas, what song is this?"
 "By God," quod he, "I synga nat amys.
 Phebus," quod he, "for al thy worthynesse,
 For al thy beautee and thy gentillesse, 250
 For al thy song and al thy mynstralcye,
 For al thy waityng, blered is thyn eye
 With oon of litel reputacioun
 Noght worth to thee, as in comparisoun
 The montance of a gnat, so moote I thryve, 255
 For on thy bed thy wyf I saugh hym swyve."

What wol ye moore? the crowe anon hym tolde,
 By sadde tokenes and by wordes bolde,
 How that his wyf han doon hire lecherye,
 Hym to greet shame and to greet vileynye, 260
 And tolde hym ofte, he saugh it with hise eyen.
 This Phebus gan awayward for to wryen,
 And thoughte his sorweful herte brast atwo,
 His bowe he bente and sette ther inne a flo,
 And in his ire his wyf thanne hath he slayn. 265
 This is theeffect, ther is namoore to sayn,
 For sorwe of which he brak his mynstralcie,
 Bothe harpe, and lute, and gyterne, and sautrie,
 And eek he brak hise arwes and his bowe,
 And after that thus spak he to the crowe. 270
 "Traitour," quod he, "with tonge of scorpioun,
 Thou hast me broght to my confusioun,
 Allas, that I was wroght! why nere I deed?
 O deere wyf, O gemme of lustiheed,
 That were to me so sad and eek so trewe, 275

Now listow deed with face pale of hewe,
 Ful giltelees, that dorste I swere, ywys.
 O rakel hand, to doon so foule amys!
 O trouble wit, O ire recchelees!
 That unavysed smyteth gilteles. 280
 O wantrust, ful of fals suspeciou, n,
 Where was thy wit and thy discrecioun?
 O, every man, be war of rakelnesse,
 Ne trowe no thyng withouten strong wisesse.
 Smyt nat to soone, er that ye witen why, 285
 And beeth avysed wel and sobrelly,
 Er ye doon any execucioun
 Upon youre ire for suspeciou.
 Allas, a thousand folk hath rakel ire
 Fully fordoon, and broght hem in the mire! 290
 Allas, for sorwe I wol myselfen slee!"
 And to the crowe, "O false thief," seyde he,
 "I wol thee quite anon thy false tale;
 Thou songe whilom lyk a nyghtyngale,
 Now shaltow, false thief, thy song forgon, 295
 And eek thy white fetheres everichon.
 Ne nevere in al thy lif ne shaltou speke,
 Thus shal men on a traytour been awreke.
 Thou and thyn ofspryng evere shul be blake,
 Ne nevere sweete noyse shul ye make, 300
 But evere crie agayn tempest and rayn,
 In tokenyng that thurgh thee my wyf is slayn."
 And to the crowe he stirte, and that anon,
 And pulled hise white fetheres everychon,
 And made hym blak, and reftc hym al his song, 305
 And eek his speche, and out at dore hym slong,
 Unto the devel—which I hym bitake!—
 And for this caas been alle Crowes blake.

Lordynges, by this ensample I yow preye,
 Beth war and taketh kepe what I seye: 310

Ne telleth nevere no man in youre lyf
 How that another man hath dight his wyf;
 He wol yow haten mortally, certeyn.
 Daun Salomon, as wise clerkes seyn,
 Techeth a man to kepen his tonge weel. 315
 But as I seyde, I am noght textueel;
 But nathelees, thus taughte me my dame;
 "My sone, thenk on the crowe, on Goddes name.
 My sone, keepe wel thy tonge and keepe thy freend,
 A wikked tonge is worse than a feend. 320
 My sone, from a feend men may hem blesse.
 My sone, God of his endelees goodnesse
 Walled a tonge with teeth and lippes eke,
 For man sholde hym avyse what he speke.
 My sone, ful ofte for to muche speche 325
 Hath many a men been spilt, as clerkes teche.
 But for litel speche, avysely,
 Is no man shent, to speke generally.
 My sone, thy tonge sholdestow restreyne
 At alle tymes, but whan thou doost thy payne 330
 To speke of God in honour and in preyere;
 The firste vertu sone, if thou wolt leere,
 Is to restreyne and kepe wel thy tonge.
 Thus lerne children, whan that they been yonge,
 My sone, of muchel spekyng yvele avysed, 335
 Ther lasse spekyng hadde ynough suffised,
 Comth muchel harm—thus was me toold and taught.—
 In muchel speche synne wanteth naught.
 Wostow wherof a rakel tonge serveth?
 Right as a swerd forkutteth and forkerveth 340
 An arm atwo, my deere sone, right so
 A tonge kutteth freendshipec al atwo.
 A jangler is to God abhomynable;
 Reed Salomon, so wys and honorable,
 Reed David in hise psalmes, reed Senekke! 345

My sone, spek nat, but with thyn heed thou bekke;
Dissimule as thou were deaf, if that thou heere
A jangler speke of perilous mateere.
The Flemyng seith, and lerne it if thee leste,
That litel janglyng causeth muchel reste. 350
My sone, if thou no wikked word hast seyde,
Thee thar nat drede for to be biwreyd;
But he that hath mysseyd, I dar wel sayn,
He may by no wey clepe his word agayn.
Thyng that is seyde is seyde, and forth it gooth; 355
Though hym repente, or be hym leef or looth,
He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd
A tale, of which he is now yvele apayd.
My sone, be war, and be noon auctour newe
Of tidynges, wheither they been false or trewe, 360
Wherso thou come, amonges hye or lowe,
Kepe wel thy tonge, and thenk upon the Crowe.”

Heere is ended the Maunciples tale of the Crowe.

GROUP I.

PROLOGUE TO THE PERSOUNS TALE

Heere folweth the Prologe of the Persouns tale.

By that the Maunciple hadde his tale al ended,
The sonne fro the south lyne was descended
So lowe, that he nas nat to my sighte
Degrees nyne and twenty as in highte.
Ten of the klokke it was tho, as I gesse, 5
For ellevene foot, or litel moore or lesse,
My shadwe was at thilke tyme as there,
Of swiche feet as my lengthe parted were
In sixe feet equal of proporcioun.
Therwith the moones exaltacioun, 10
I meene Libra, alwey gan ascende,
As we were entryng at a thropes ende.
For which our Hoost, as he was wont to gye,
As in this caas, oure joly compaignye,
Seyde in this wise, "Lordynges everichoon, 15
Now lakketh us no tales mo than oon,
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree;
I trowe that we han herd of ech degree.
Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce,
I pray to God, so yeve hym right good chaunce 20
That telleth this tale to us lustily!
"Sire preest," quod he, "artow a vicary,
Or arte a person? sey sooth by thy fey.
Be what thou be, ne breke thou nat oure pley;
For every man save thou hath toold his tale. 25
Unbokele and shewe us what is in thy male,
For trewely, me thynketh by thy cheere

Thou sholdest knytte up wel a greet mateere.
 Telle us a fable anon, for Cokkes bones."
 This Persoun him answerede, al atones, 30
 "Thou gettest fable noon ytoold for me,
 For Paul, that writeth unto Thymothee,
 Repreveth hem that weyveth soothfastnesse,
 And tellen fables, and swich wrecchednesse.
 Why sholde I sowen draf out of my fest 35
 Whan I may sowen whete, if that me lest?
 For which I seye, if that yow list to heere,
 Moralitee and vertuous mateere;
 And thanne that ye wol yeve me audience,
 I wol ful fayn, at Cristes reverence, 40
 Do yow plesaunce leefful, as I kan.
 But trusteth wel I am a southren man,
 I kan nat geeste Rum, Ram, Ruf by lettre,
 Ne, God woot, rym holde I but litel bettre,
 And therfore if yow list, I wol nat glose, 45
 I wol yow telle a myrie tale in prose
 To knytte up al this feeste, and make an ende,
 And Jesu, for his grace, wit me sende
 To shewe yow the wey, in this viage,
 Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrymage 50
 That highte Jerusalem celestial.
 And if ye vouchesauf, anon I shal
 Bigynne upon my tale, for which I preye,
 Telle youre avys, I kan no bettre seye.
 But nathelees, this meditacioun 55
 I putte it ay under correccioun
 Of clerkes, for I am nat textucel;
 I take but sentence, trusteth weel.
 Therfore I make a protestacioun
 That I wol stonde to correccioun." 60

Upon this word we han assented soone;
 For, as us semed, it was for to doone

To enden in som vertuous sentence,
And for to yeve hym space and audience;
And bede oure Hoost he sholde to hym seye 65
That alle we to telle his tale hym preye.
Oure Hoost hadde the wordes for us alle:
“Sire preest,” quod he, “now faire yow bifalle,
Sey what yow list, and we wol gladly heere.”
And with that word he seyde in this manere, 70
“Telleth,” quod he, “youre meditacioun;
But hasteth yow, the sonne wole adoun.
Beth fructuous, and that in litel space,
And to do wel God sende yow his grace.”

[Then follows the Persones Tale, concerning penitence, vices and virtues, and holy living. At the end appears the retractation, so-called, of Chaucer.]

Here taketh the makere of this book his leve.

Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretys or rede, that if ther be any thyng in it that liketh hem, that therof they thanken oure Lord Jesu Crist, of whom procedeth al wit and al goodnesse. And if ther be any thyng that displese hem, I preye 1085 hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unkonnyng, and nat to my wyl, that wolde ful fayn have seyde better, if I hadde had konnyng. For oure Boke seith, 'al that is writen, is writen for oure doctrine,' and that is myn entente. Wherefore, I 1090 biseke yow mekely for the mercy of God, that ye preye for me that Crist have mercy on me, and foryeve me my giltes; and namely, of my translacions and enditynges of worldly vanitees, the whiche I revoke in my retracciouns; 1095

As is the book of Troilus, The book also of Fame, The book of the .xxv. Ladies, The book of the Duchesse, The book of seint Valentynes day of the Parlement of Briddes, The tales of Caunterbury (thilke that sownen into synne), The book of the Leoun, and many another book, if they were in my remembrance; and many a song and many a lecherous lay, that Crist for his grete mercy foryeve me the synne. But of the translacion of Bocce de Consolacione, and othere bookes of Legendes of Seintes and omelies, and moralitee, and devocioun; that thanke I oure Lord Jesu Crist, and his blisful mooder, and alle the seintes of hevene; bisekyng hem that they from hennesforth unto my lyves ende sende me grace to biwayle my giltes, and to studie 1110 to the salvacioun of my soule; and graunte me grace of verray penitence, confessioun, and satisfaccioun to

doon in this present lyf, thurgh the benigne grace of
Hym, that is kyng of kynges, and preest over alle
preestes, that boghte us with the precious blood of 1115
his herte, so that I may been oon of hem at the day
of doome that shulle be saved. Qui cum patre,
&cetera.

*Heere is ended the book of the tales of Caunterbury com-
piled by Geffrey Chaucer of whos soule Jesu Crist have
mercy. Amen.*

THE COMPLEYNT TO PITE

Pite, that I have sought so yore agoo
With herte soore, and ful of besy peyne,
That in this worlde was never wight so woo
Withoute dethe; and yf I shal not feyne,
My purpose was to Pite to compleyne, 5
Upon the crueltee and tirannye
Of Love, that for my trouthe doth me dye.

And when that I, be lengthe of certeyne yeres,
Had evere in oon a tyme soughte to speke,
To Pitee ran I, al bespreynte with teres, 10
To prayen hir on Cruelte me awreke.
But er I myght with any worde out breke,
Or tellen any of my peynes smerte,
I fonde hir dede, and buried in an herte.

Adoune I fel, when that I saugh the herse, 15
Dede as a stone, while that the swogh me laste;
But up I roose, with coloure ful dyverse,
And petously on hir myn eyen caste,
And ner the corps I gan to presen faste,
And for the soule I shope me for to prey; 20
I nas but lorne, ther was no more to sey.

Thus am I slayne, sith that Pite is dede,
Allas that day, that ever hyt shuld falle!
What maner man dar now hold up his hede?
To whom shal eny sorwful herte calle? 25
Now Cruelte hath caste to slee us alle
In ydel hope, folke redelesse of peyne,
Syth she is dede, to whom shul we compleyne?

2 hert. 15 that om. 16 a om. 18 I caste. 19 to om. 21 nas was
25 shal now.

But yet encreseth me this wonder newe,
 That no wight woot that she is dede, but I. 30
 So many men as in her tyme hir knewe;
 And yet she dyed not so sodeynly,
 For I have sought hir ever ful besely,
 Sith firste I hadde witte or mannes mynde,
 But she was dede, er that I koude hir fynde. 35

Aboute hir herse there stoden lustely,
 Withoute any woo, as thoughte me,
 Bounte parfyt, wel armed and richely,
 And fresshe Beaute, Lust and Jolyte,
 Assured Maner, Youthe and Honeste, 40
 Wisdome, Estaat, Drede and Governauce,
 Confedred both by bonde and alliaunce.

A compleynt had I writen in myn honde,
 For to have put to Pittee as a bille;
 But when I al this companye ther fonde 45
 That rather wolden al my cause spille
 Then do me helpe, I helde my pleynte stille,
 For to that folke, with-uten any fayle,
 Withoute Pitee ther may no bille availe.

Then leve I al thise vertues, save Pite, 50
 Kepyng the corps, as ye have herde me seyn,
 Cofedered alle by bonde of Cruelte,
 And ben assented when I shal be sleyn.
 And I have put my complaynt up ageyn,
 For to my foes bille I dar not shewe, 55
 Theffect of which seith thus, in wordes fewe:

32 she, so om. 34 mannes om.; I hadde firste. 35 that om. 44 For om.
 46 wolde. 47 pleynt. 48 withoutes. 50 I we; thise om.; save only.
 52 alle om.; of and by.

[*The Bill of Complaint.*] (*Tern I.*)

Humblest of herte, highest of reverence,
 Benygne flour, coroune of vertues alle,
 Sheweth unto youre rialle excellence
 Youre servaunt, yf I durste me so calle, 60
 Hys mortal harme, in which he is yfalle,
 And noght al oonly for his evel fare,
 But for your renoun, as he shal declare.

Hit stondeth thus, your contraire, Crueltee
 Allyed is ayenst your regalye 65
 Under colour of womanly beaute,
 For men shulde not knowe hir tirannye,
 With Bounte, Gentilesse, and Curtesye,
 And hath depryved yow now of your place
 That hyght "Beaute apertenent to Grace." 70

For kyndely, by youre herytage ryght,
 Ye be annexed ever unto Bounte,
 And verrelly ye oughte do youre myght
 To helpe Trouthe in his adversyte.
 Ye be also the corowne of Beaute, 75
 And certes, yf ye wanten in these tweyn,
 The worlde is lore, ther is no more to seyn.

(*Tern II.*)

Eke what avaieth Maner and Gentilesse
 Withoute yow, benygne creature?
 Shal Cruelte be your governeresse? 80
 Allas, what herte may hyt longe endure?
 Wherefore, but ye the rather take cure
 To breke that perilouse alliaunce,
 Ye sleen hem that ben in your obeisaunce.

60 durst. 64 that your contrary. 69 now om. 70 is hygh; your grace
 76 want.

And further over, yf ye suffre this, 85
 Youre renoun ys fordoo than in a throwe;
 Ther shal no man wete well what Pite is.
 Allas, that your renoun is falle so lowe!
 Ye be also fro youre heritage y-throwe
 By Cruelte, that occupieth youre place, 90
 And we despeyred that seken to your grace.

Have mercy on me, thow Herenus quene,
 That yow have sought so tendirly and yore,
 Let somme streme of lyght on me be sene,
 That love and drede yow, ever lenger the more, 95
 For sothely for to seyne, I bere the soore;
 And though I be not kunnyng for to pleyne,
 For Goddis love, have mercy on my peyne.

(*Tern III.*)

My peyne is this, that what so I desire,
 That have I not, ne no thing lyke therto; 100
 And ever setteth desire myn hert on fire.
 Eke on that other syde where so I goo,
 What maner thinge that may encrease my woo,
 That have I redy unsoghte every where.
 Me lakketh but my deth, and than my bere. 105

What nedeth to shewe parcel of my peyne,
 Syth every woo that herte may bethynke
 I suffre, and yet I dar not to yow pleyne?
 For wel I wote, though I wake or wynke,
 Ye rekke not whether I flete or synke; 110
 But natheles my trouthe I shal sustene
 Unto my deth, and that shal wel be sene.

This is to seyne, I wol be youres ever
Though ye me slee by Crueltee your foo,
Algate my spirite shal never dissever
Fro youre servise, for eny peyne or woo.
Sith ye be ded, allas, that hyt is soo!
Thus for your deth I may wel wepe and pleyne,
With herte sore and ful of besy peyne.

115

114 *foo soo.* 117 *yet ded.*

THE BOOKE OF THE DUCHESS

I have grete wonder, be this lyghte,
 How that I lyve, for day ne nyghte
 I may nat slepe wel nygh noght,
 I have so many an ydel thoght
 Purely for defaulte of slepe, 5
 That by my trouthe I take no kepe
 Of noo thinge, how hyt cometh or gooth,
 Ne me nys nothyng leve nor looth.
 Al is ylyche goode to me,
 Joy or sorowe, wherso hyt be, 10
 For I have felynge in no thyng,
 But as yt were a mased thyng
 Alway in poynt to falle a-down,
 For sorwful ymagynacioun
 Ys alway hooly in my mynde. 15
 And wel ye woote, agaynes kynde
 Hyt were to lyven in thys wyse,
 For Nature wolde nat suffyse
 To noon erthely creature
 Nat longe tyme to endure 20
 Withoute slepe, and be in sorwe.
 And I ne may, no nyght ne morwe,
 Slepe, and thys melancolye
 And drede I have for to dye,
 Defaulte of slepe, and hevynesse, 25
 Hath sleyne my spirite of quykesse,
 That I have loste al lustyhede.
 Suche fantasies ben in myn hede,
 So I not what is best too doo.
 But men myght axe me, why soo 30
 I may not sleepe, and what me is?

But natheles, whoe aske this
 Leseth his asking trewely.
 Myselven can not telle why
 The southe, but trewly, as I gesse, 35
 I holde it be a sicknes
 That I have suffred this eight yeere;
 And yet my boote is never the nere,
 For there nis phisicien but one
 That may me heale, but that is done. 40
 Passe we over untill efte;
 That will not be, mote nedes be lefte.
 Our first mater is good to kepe.
 Soe when I sawe I might not slepe
 Til now late, this other night, 45
 Upon my bedde I sate upright,
 And bade one reche me a booke,
 A romaunce, and it me tok
 To rede, ~~and~~ drive the night away;
 For me thought it beter play 50
 Then playen either at chesse or tables.
 And in this boke were written fables
 That clerkes had in olde tyme,
 And other poets, put in rime
 To rede, and for to be in minde, 55
 While men loved the lawe of kinde.
 This boke ne speake, but of such thinges,
 Of quenes lives, and of kinges,
 And many other thinges smalle.
 Amonge all this, I fonde a tale 60
 That me thought a wonder thing.
 This was the tale: There was a king
 That hight Seyes, and had a wife
 The beste that might beare lyfe,
 And this alcene hight Alcyone. 65

32 natheles. 33 trewly. 34 tell. 36 hold. 39 is. 51 play. 56 of in.
 58 kings 59 things. 64 best.

Soe it befill, thereafter soone,
 This king wol wenden over see.
 To tellen shortly, whan that he
 Was in the see, thus in this wise,
 Soche a tempest gan to rise 70
 That brake her maste and made it fal,
 And cleft ther ship, and dreint hem all,
 That never was founden, as it telles,
 Borde, ne man, ne nothing elles.
 Right thus this king Seyes loste his life. 75
 Now for to spoken of his wife,
 This lady, that was left at home,
 Hath wonder, that the king ne come
 Home, for it was a longe terme.
 Anone her herte began to erme, 80
 And for that her thought evermo
 It was not wele he dwelled soe,
 She longed soe after the king
 That certes, it were a pitous thing
 To tell her hartely sorowfull life 85
 That had, alas, this noble wife,
 For him she loved alderbeste.
 Anone she sent bothe eeste and weste
 To seke him, but they founde nought.
 "Alas!" (quoth shee) "that I was wrought! 90
 And where my lord, my love, be deed?
 Certes I will never eate breede,
 I make a vowe to my god here,
 But I mowe of my lord here."
 Soche sorowe this lady to her toke 95
 That trewly I, which made this booke,
 Had suche pittee and suche rowthe
 To rede hir sorwe, that by my trowthe
 I ferde the worse al the morwe

67 woll. 73 founde. 76 speake of Alcyone. 79 long. 80 erme yerme.
 82 he dwelled her thought. 86 she had; *allas om.* 87 alas she.

Aftir, to thenken on hir sorwe. 100
 So whan this lady koude here noo worde
 That no man myghte fynde hir lorde,
 Ful ofte she swouned, and sayed alas!
 For sorwe ful nygh woode she was,
 Ne she koude no rede but oon, 105
 But doune on knees she sate anoon,
 And weep that pittee was to here.
 "A! mercy! swete lady dere!"
 Quod she to Juno, hir goddesse;
 "Helpe me out of thys distresse, 110
 And yeve me grace my lord to se
 Soone, or wete wher so he be,
 Or how he fareth, or in what wise,
 And I shal make yowe sacrificse,
 And hooly youres become I shal 115
 With good wille, body, hert, and al.
 And but thow wylte this, lady swete,
 Sende me grace to slepe, and mete
 In my slepe somme certeyn sweven,
 Wher-thorgh that I may knowe even 120
 Whethir my lorde be quyke or ded."
 With that worde she henge doun the hed,
 And felle a-swowne as colde as ston.
 Hyr women kaught hir up anoon,
 And broghten hir in bed al naked; 125
 And she, forweped and forwaked,
 Was wery, and thus the dede slepe
 Fil on hir, or she tooke kepe,
 Through Juno that had herde hir bone,
 That made hir to slepe sone, 130
 For as she prayede ryght so was done
 In dede, for Juno ryght anone
 Called thus hir messagere
 To doo hir erande, and he come nere.

Whan he was come she bad hym thus, 135
 "Go bet," quod Juno, "to Morpheus—
 Thou knowest hym wel, the god of slepe—
 Now understonde wel, and take kepe,
 Sey thus on my halfe, that he
 Go faste into the grete se, 140
 And byd hym, that on alle thynges,
 He take up Seys body the kynge,
 That lyeth ful pale and no thynges rody.
 Byd hym crepe into the body
 And doo hit goon to Alcione, 145
 The quene, ther she lyeth allone,
 And shewe hir shortly, hit ys no nay,
 How hit was dreynt thys other day;
 And do the body speke soo
 Ryght as hyt was woned to doo, 150
 The whiles that hit was a-lyve.
 Goo now faste, and hye the blyve."
 This messenger toke leve, and went
 Upon hys wey, and never ne stent
 Til he come to the derke valey 155
 That stant betwexe roches twey,
 Ther never yet grew corne ne gras,
 Ne tre, ne nothyng that oughte was,
 Beste, ne man, ne nothyng elles,
 Save ther were a fewe welles 160
 Came rennyng fro the clyffes adoun
 That made a dedely slepyng soun,
 And ronnen down ryght by a cave,
 That was under a rokke ygrave,
 Amydde the valey, wonder depe, 165
 There these goddys lay and slepe,
 Morpheus and Eclympasteyre,
 That was the god of slepes eyre,

141 al. 142 That he. 144 Bud. 145 Alchione. 148 ryght soo. 156 betwex.
 158, 159 *nothyng* noght.

That slepe and did noon other werke.
 This cave was also as derke 170
 As helle pitte, over al aboute,
 They had good leyser for to route,
 To envye who myght slepe beste;
 Somme henge her chyn upon hir breste,
 And slept upryght, hir hed yhedde, 175
 And somme lay naked in her bedde,
 And slepe, whiles the dayes laste.
 This messenger come fleyng faste,
 And cried, "O how! a-wake anoon!"
 Hit was for noght, there herde hym non. 180
 "Awake," quod he, "whoo ys, lythe there?"
 And blew his horne ryght in here eere,
 And cried, "awaketh!" wonder hye.
 This god of slepe with hys on ye
 Caste up, and axed, "who clepeth there?" 185
 "Hyt am I!" quod this messagere,
 "Juno bad thow shuldest goon"—
 And tolde hym what he shulde doon,
 As I have tolde yow here to-fore,
 Hyt ys no nede reherse hyt more; 190
 And went hys wey whan he had sayede.
 Anoon this god of slepe abrayede
 Out of hys slepe, and gan to goon,
 And dyd as he had bede hym doon,
 Tooke up the dreynte body sone, 195
 And bare hyt forth to Alcione,
 Hys wife the quene, ther as she lay,
 Ryght even a quarter before day;
 And stood ryght at hys beddys fete,
 And called hir ryght as she hete, 200
 By name, and sayede, "My swete wyfe,
 Awake, let be your sorwful lyfe,
 For in your sorwe there lyth no rede,

For certes, swete, I nam but dede,
 Ye shul me never on lyve yse. 205
 But good swete herte, look that ye
 Bury my body, for suche a tyde
 Ye mowe hyt fynde, the see besyde;
 And farewel, swete, my worldes blysse!
 I praye God youre sorwe lysse;— 210
 To lytel while oure blysse lasteth!"
 With that hir eyen up she casteth,
 And sawe noght. "Allas!" quod she for sorwe,
 And deyede within the thridde morwe.
 But what she sayede more in that swowe 215
 I may not telle yow as nowe,
 Hyt were to longe for to dwelle,
 My first matere I wil yow telle,
 Wherfore I have tolde this thyng
 Of Alcione and Seys the kynge. 220
 For thus moche dar I saye welle,
 I had be dolven everydelle,
 And ded ryght thorgh defaulte of slepe,
 Yif I ne had redde and take kepe
 Of this tale next before. 225
 And I wol telle yow wherfore;
 For I ne myght, for bote ne bale,
 Slepe or I had redde thys tale
 Of this dreynte Seys the kynge,
 And of the goddis of slepyng. 230
 Whan I had redde thys tale wel,
 And over loked hyt everydel,
 Me thoght wonder yf hit were so;
 For I had never herde speke or tho
 Of noo goddis that koude make 235
 Men to slepe, ne for to wake,
 For I ne knewe never God but oon.

204 am. 206 hert; look om. 210 pray. 215 swowe sorowe. 220 Alchione.
 221 say. 226 I om.

And in my game I sayede anoon—
 And yet me lyst ryght evel to pley—
 “Rather then that y shulde dey 240
 Thorgh defaulte of slepyng thus,
 I wolde yive thilke Morpheus
 Or hys goddesse, dame Juno,
 Or somme wight ellis, I ne roght who,
 To make me slepe and have some reste, 245
 I wil yive hym the alderbeste
 Yifte, that ever he abode hys lyve,
 And here, on warde, ryght now, as blyve;
 Yif he wol make me slepe a lyte,
 Of downe of pure dowves white 250
 I wil yif hym a feder bedde,
 Rayed with golde and ryght wel cledde
 In fyne blak satyn de owter mere,
 And many a pelowe, and every bere
 Of clothe of Reynes to slepe soft, 255
 Hym thar not nede to turnen ofte;
 And I wol yive hym al that fallys
 To a chambre, and al hys hallys
 I wol do peynte with pure golde,
 And tapite hem ful many folde 260
 Of oo sute, this shal he have,
 Yf I wiste where were hys cave,
 Yf he kan make me slepe sone,
 As did the goddesse quene Alcione;
 And thus this ylke god Morpheus 265
 May wyne of me moo fees thus,
 Than ever he wanne, and to Juno
 That ys hys goddesse I shal soo do,
 I trow, that she shal holde hir payede.”
 I hadde unneth that worde y-sayede, 270
 Ryght thus I have tolde hyt yow,
 That sodeynly, I nyste how,

Suche a luste anoon me tooke
 To slepe, that ryght upon my booke
 Y fil aslepe, and therwith evene 275
 Me mette so ynly swete a swevene,
 So wonderful, that never yitte
 Y trowe no man had the wytte
 To konne wel my sweven rede;
 No, not Joseph, withoute drede, 280
 Of Egipte, ho that red so
 The kynges metynge, Pharao;
 No more than koude the lest of us,
 Ne nat skarsly Macrobeus—
 He that wrote al thavysyoun, 285
 That he mette, kyng Scipioun,
 The noble man, the Affrikan,
 Swiche mervayles fortunéd than—
 I trowe, a-rede my dremes even.
 Loo, thus hyt was, thys was my sweven. 290
 Me thoghte thus: that hyt was May,
 And in the dawenyng I lay,
 Me mette thus, in my bed al naked,
 And loked forth, for I was waked
 With smale foules a grete hepe, 295
 That had affrayed me out of slepe
 Thorgh noyse and swettenesse of her songe.
 And as me mette, they sate a-monge
 Upon my chambre roofe wythoute,
 Upon the tyles over al aboute, 300
 And songen everych in hys wyse,
 The moste solempne servise,
 By noote, that ever man, y trowe,
 Had herde, for somme of hem songe lowe,
 Somme high, and al of oon acorde. 305
 To telle shortly, att oo worde,
 Was never harde so swete a steven,

But hyt had be a thyng of heven,
 So mery a soun, so swete entewnes;
 That certes, for the toun of Tewnes, 310
 I nolde but I had herde hem synge,
 For al my chambre gan to ryng
 Thorgh syngynge of her armonye.
 For instrument nor melodye
 Was nowhere herde yet halfe so swete, 315
 Nor of acorde halfe so mete;
 For ther was noon of hem that feyned
 To synge, for eche of hem hym peyned
 To fynde out mery crafty notys,
 They ne spared not her throtys. 320
 And soothe to seyn, my chambre was
 Ful wel depeynted, and with glas
 Were al the wyndowes wel yglasyd
 Ful clere, and nat an hoole ycrasyd,
 That to beholde hyt was grete joye. 325
 For holy al the story of Troye
 Was in the glasyng ywroght thus,
 Of Ector and of kynge Priamus,
 Of Achilles and Lamedoun
 And eke of Medea and of Jasoun, 330
 Of Paris, Eleyne, and of Lavyne.
 And alle the wallys with colouris fyne
 Were peynted, bothe text, and glose,
 And al the Romaunce of the Rose.
 My wyndowes were shette echon, 335
 And through the glas the sonne shon
 Upon my bed with bryghte bemys,
 With many glade gilde stremys,
 And eke the welken was so faire,
 Blew, bryght, clere was the ayre, 340
 And ful attempre, for sothe, hyt was,
 For nother to colde nor hoote yt nas,

Ne in al the welkene was a clowde.
 And as I lay thus, wonder lowde
 Me thoght I herde an hunte blowe, 345
 Tassay hys horne, and for to knowe
 Whether hyt were clere or horse of soune.
 And I herde goynge bothe up and doune
 Men, hors, houndes, and other thynges,
 And al men speken of huntynge, 350
 How they wolde slee the hert, with strengthe,
 And how the hert had upon lengthe,
 So moche embosed, y not now what.
 Anoon, ryght whan I herde that,
 How that they wolde on huntynge goon, 355
 I was ryght glad, and up anoon
 Tooke my hors and forthe I went
 Out of my chambre, I never stent
 Til I come to the felde withoute.
 Ther overtoke y a grete route 360
 Of huntres and eke of foresterys,
 With many relays and lymerys,
 And hyed hem to the forest faste,
 And I with hem; so at the laste
 I asked oon, ladde a lymere, 365
 "Say, felowe, whoo shal hunte here?"
 Quod I, and he answered ageyn,
 "Syr, themperour Octovyen,"
 Quod he, "and ys here faste by."
 "A Goddys halfe, in goode tyme," quod I, 370
 "Go we faste!" and gan to ryde,
 Whan we came to the forest syde,
 Every man didde ryght anoon
 As to huntynge fille to doon.
 The mayster hunte anoon, fote hote, 375
 With a grete horne blewe thre mote
 At the uncoupylynge of hys houndys.

Withynne a while the herte founde ys,
 Ihalowed, and rechased faste
 Longe tyme, and so at the laste 380
 This hert rused, and staale away
 Fro alle the houndes a prevy way.
 The houndes had overshette hem alle,
 And were on a defaulte yfalle.
 Therwyth the hunte wonder faste 385
 Blewe a forleygne at the laste.
 I was go walked fro my tree,
 And as I went, ther came by mee
 A whelpe, that fauned me as I stode,
 That hadde yfolowed, and koude no goode. 390
 Hyt come and crepte to me as lowe,
 Ryght as hyt had me yknowe,
 Hylde doun hys hede, and joyned hys erys,
 And leyde al smothe doun hys herys.
 I wolde have kaught hyt, and anoon 395
 Hyt fled, and was fro me goon;
 And I hym folwed, and hyt forthe went
 Doune by a floury grene went
 Ful thikke of gras ful softe and swete,
 With flourys fele, faire under fete, 400
 And litel used hyt semed thus,
 For both Flora and Zephirus,
 They two that make floures growe,
 Had made her dwellynge ther, I trowe,
 For hit was, on to beholde, 405
 As thogh therthe envye wolde
 To be gayer than the heven,
 To have moo floures, swche¹ seven
 As in the welkene sterris bee.
 Hyt had forgete the povertie 410
 That wynter, thorgh hys colde morwes,

¹See Glossary.383 *hem* hym. 384 upon. 409 walkene.

Had made hyt suffre, and his sorwes;
 All was forgeten, and that was sene,
 For al the woode was waxen grene,
 Swetnesse of dewe had made hyt waxe. 415
 Hyt ys no nede eke for to axe
 Where there were many grene greves,
 Or thikke of trees so ful of leves,
 And every tree stooode by hym selve
 Fro other wel tene fete or twelve. 420
 So grete trees, so huge of strengthe,
 Or fourty, fifty fedme lengthe,
 Clene withoute bowgh or stikke,
 With croppes brode, and eke as thikke,
 They were nat an ynche asonder, 425
 That hit was shadewe over al under,
 And many an herte and many an hynde
 Was both before me and be-hynde.
 Of founes, sowres, bukkes, does,
 Was ful the woode, and many roes 430
 And many sqwireles that sete
 Ful high upon the trees and ete,
 And in hir maner made festys.
 Shortly, hyt was so ful of bestys,
 That thogh Argus, the noble counter, 435
 Sete to rekene in hys counter,
 And rekene with his figuris ten—
 For by tho figuris mowe al ken
 Yf they be crafty, rekene and noumbre,
 And tel of every thinge the noumbre— 440
 Yet shulde he fayle to rekene evene
 The wondres, me mette in my swevene.
 But forth they romed ryght wonder faste
 Doune the woode, so at the laste
 I was war of a man in blak, 445
 That sete and had yturned his bak

To an ooke, an huge tree.

"Lorde," thocht I, "who may that be?

What ayleth hym to sitten here?"

Anoon ryght I wente nere;

450

Than founde I sitte even upryght,

A wonder wel-farynge knyght—

By the maner me thoghte soo

Of good mochel, and ryght yonge therto,

Of the age of foure and twenty yere.

455

Upon hys berde but lytel here,

And he was clothed al in blake.

I stalked even unto hys bake,

And ther I stooode as stille as ought,

That, soth to saye, he sawe me nought,

460

For why, he henge hys hede adoune,

And with a dedely sorwful soun

He made of ryme ten vers or twelfe,

Of a compleynt to hymselfe,

The moste pitee, the moste rowthe,

465

That ever I herde, for, by my trowthe,

Hit was gret wonder that nature

Myght suff're any creature

To have suche sorwe, and be not ded,

Ful petouse, pale, and nothyng red.

470

He sayed a lay, a maner songe,

Withoute noote, withoute songe,

And was thys, for ful wel I kan

Reherse hyt; ryght thus hyt began.—

The Lay.

"I have of sorwe so grete wone

475

That joye gete I never none,

Now that I see my lady bryght,

Which I have loved with al my myght,

Is fro me ded, and ys a-goon.

Allas, dethe, what ayleth the? 480

That thou noldest have taken me

Whan thou toke my lady swete,

That was so faire, so freshe, so fre,

So goode, that men may wel se

Of al goodenesse she had no mete!" 485

Whan he had made thus his complaynte,

Hys sorwful hert gan faste faynte,

And his spiritis wexen dede.

The bloode was fled, for pure drede,

Doune to hys hert, to make hym warme, 490

For wel hyt feled the hert had harme,

To wete eke why hyt was adrad

By kynde, and for to make hyt glad;

For hit ys membre principal

Of the body; and that made al 495

Hys hewe chaunge and wexe grene

And pale, for ther noo bloode ys sene

In no maner lym of hys.

Anoon therwith whan y sawgh this,

He ferde thus evel there he sete, 500

I went and stode ryght at his fete,

And grette hym; but he spake noght,

But argued with his oun thoght,

And in hys wytte disputed faste

Why and how hys lyfe myght laste; 505

Hym thought hys sorwes were so smerte

And lay so colde upon hys herte;

So through hys sorwes and hevy thoght

Made hym that he herde me noght,

For he had wel nygh loste hys mynde, 510

Thogh Pan, that men clepe god of kynde,

Were for hys sorwes never so wrothe;

But at the last, to sayn ryght sothe,

He was war of me, how y stode
 Before hym, and did of myn hoode, 515
 And had ygret hym as I best koude,
 Debonayrly, and no thyng lowde.
 He sayde, "I prey the, be not wrothe,
 I herde the not, to seyn the sothe,
 Ne I sawgh the not, syr, trewely." 520
 "A, good sir, no fors," quod y,
 "I am ryght sory yif I have oughte
 Destroubled yow out of youre thoughte;
 Forgive me, yif I have mystake."
 "Yis, thamendys is lyght to make," 525
 Quod he, "for ther lyeth noon therto;
 There ys no thyng myssayde nor do."
 Loo, how goodely spake thys knyghte,
 As hit had be another wyghte;
 He made hyt nouthr towgh ne queynte. 530
 And I sawe that, and gan me aqueynt
 With hym, and fonde hym so trefable,
 Ryght wonder skylful and resonable,
 As me thoght, for al hys bale.
 Anoon-ryght I gan fynde a tale 535
 To hym, to loke wher I myght oughte
 Have more knowynge of hys thoughte.
 "Sir," quod I, "this game is doon;
 I holde that this hert be goon;
 These huntys konne hym nowher see." 540
 "Y do no fors therof," quod he,
 "My thought ys thereon never a dele."
 "Be oure Lorde," quod I, "y trow yow wele;
 Ryght so me thenketh by youre chere.
 But sir, oo thyng wol ye here? 545
 Me thynketh, in grete sorowe I yow see;
 But certys, good sir, yif that yee
 Wolde ought discure me youre woo,

I wolde, as wys God helpe me soo,
 Amende hyt, yif I kan or may. 550
 Ye mowe preve hyt be assay.
 For by my trouthe, to make yow hool
 I wol do alle my power hool.
 And telleth me of your sorwes smerte,
 Paraventure hyt may ease youre herte, 555
 That semeth ful seke under your syde."
 With that he loked on me asyde
 As who sayth, "nay, that wol not be."
 "Graunt mercy, goode frende," quod he,
 "I thanke the that thou woldest soo, 560
 But hyt may never the rather be doo.
 No man may my sorwe glade,
 That maketh my hewe to fal and fade,
 And hath myn understandyng lorne,
 That me ys woo that I was borne! 565
 May noght make my sorwes slyde
 Nought al the remedyes of Ovyde;
 Ne Orpheus, god of melodye,
 Ne Dedalus, with his playes slye,
 Ne hele me may noo phisicien, 570
 Noght Ypocras, ne Galyen.
 Me ys woo that I lyve oures twelve,
 But whoo so wol assay hymselfe,
 Whether his hert kan have pitee
 Of any sorwe, lat hym see me. 575
 Y wrechch, that deth hath made al naked
 Of al blysse that ever was maked,
 Y worthe worste of alle wyghtys,
 That hate my dayes and my nyghtys;
 My lyfe, my lustes, be me loothe, 580
 For al welfare and I be wroothe.
 The pure deth ys so ful my foo,

That I wolde deye, hyt wolde not soo.
For whan I folwe hyt, hit wol flee,
I wolde have hym, hyt nyl nat me. 585
This ys my peyne, wythoute rede,
Alway deynge and be not dede,
That Thesiphus, that lyeth in helle,
May not of more sorwe telle.
And who so wiste alle, be my trouthe, 590
My sorwe, but he hadde rowthe
And pitee of my sorwes smerte,
That man hath a fendely herte.
For who so seethe me firste on morwe
May seyn, he hath mette with sorwe, 595
For y am Sorwe, and Sorwe ys y.
Allas! and I wol tel the why,
My sorowe ys turned to pleyntyng,
And al my lawghtre to wepyng,
My glade thoghtys to hevynesse, 600
In travayle ys myn ydelnesse,
And eke my reste, my wele is woo,
My goode ys harme, and ever-moo
In wrathe ys turned my pleyng,
And my delyte into sorwyng. 605
Myn hele ys turned into sekenesse,
In drede ys al my sykernesse,
To derke ys turned al my lyghte,
My wytte ys foly, my day ys nyghte,
My love ys hate, my slepe wakyng, 610
My merthe and meles ys fastyng,
My countenaunce ys nycete,
And al abawed, where so I be.
My pees in pledyng and in werre—
Allas, how myght I fare werre! 615
My boldenesse ys turned to shame,

For fals Fortune hath pleyde a game
 Atte the chesse with me, allas, the while!
 The trayteresse fals, and ful of gyle,
 That al behoteth, and no thyng halte, 620
 She gethe upryght and yet she is halte,
 That baggeth foule and loketh faire,
 The dispitouse debonaire,
 That skorneth many a creature;
 An ydole of fals portrayture 625
 Ys she, for she wol sone wrien,
 She is the monstres hed ywrien,
 As fylthe over ystrawed with flouris.
 Hir moste worshippe and hir flour ys
 To lyen, for that ys hyr nature, 630
 Withoute feythe, lawe, or mesure;
 She ys fals; and ever lawghynge
 With one yghe, and that other wepynge;
 That ys broght up she sette al doun,
 I lykne hyr to the scorpoun, 635
 That ys a fals flateyrynge beste,
 For with his hede he maketh feste,
 But al amydde hys flaterynge,
 With hys tayle hyt wol styngne,
 And envenyme, and so wol she. 640
 She ys thenvyouse charite
 That ys ay fals, and semeth wele,
 So turneth she hyr false whele
 Aboute, for hyt ys nothyngne stable,
 Now by the fire, now at table, 645
 For many oon hath she thus yblent.
 She ys pley of enchauntement,
 That semeth oon and ys not soo;
 The false thefe, what hath she doo,
 Trowest thou? by oure Lorde, I wol the sey. 650

At the chesse with me she gan to pleye;
 With hir false draughtes dyvers
 She staale on me, and toke my fers.
 And whan I sawgh my fers away,
 Allas, I kouthe no lenger play, 655
 But seyde, 'farewel, swete, ywys,
 And fare-wel al that ever ther ys!
 Therwith Fortune seyde, 'chek here,
 And mate in the myd poynt of the chekkere'
 With a pounne errante, allas! 660
 Ful craftier to pley she was
 Than Athalus, that made the game
 First of the chesse, so was hys name;
 But God wolde I had, oones or twyes,
 Ykoude and knowe the jeupardyes 665
 That koude the Greke Pictagoras;
 I shulde have pleyde the bet at ches,
 And kept my fers the bet therby,
 And thogh, wherto? for trewely
 I holde that wysshe nat worthe a stree; 670
 Hyt had be never the bet for me.
 For Fortune kan so many a wyle,
 Ther be but fewe kan hir begile,
 And eke she ys the lasse to blame;
 My selfe I wolde have do the same, 675
 Before God, hadde I be as she;
 She oght the more excused be.
 For this I say yet more therto,
 Had I be God and myghte have do
 My wille, whan my fers she kaught, 680
 I wolde have drawe the same draught.
 For also wys God yive me reste,
 I dar wel swere she tooke the beste!
 But through that draught I have lorne

My blysse, alas, that I was borne! 685
 For evermore, y trowe trewly,
 For al my wille, my luste holly
 Ys turned, but yet, what to doone?
 Be oure lorde, hyt ys to deye soone,
 For no thyng I leve hyt noght, 690
 But lyve and deye ryght in this thoght.
 For there nys planete in firmament,
 Ne in ayre, ne in erthe noon element,
 That they ne yive me a yifte echon
 Of wepyng, whan I am allon. 695
 For whan that I avise me wel,
 And bethenke me every del,
 How that ther lyeth in rekenyng
 Inne my sorwe for no thyng;
 And how ther levyth noe gladnesse 700
 May gladde me of my distresse,
 And how I have loste suffisance,
 And therto I have no plesance,
 Than may I say, I have ryght noght.
 And whan al this falleth in my thoght, 705
 Allas, than am I overcome!
 For that ys doon ys not to come.
 I have more sorowe than Tantale."
 And whan I herde hym tel thys tale
 This pitously, as I yow telle, 710
 Unnethe myght y lenger duelle,
 Hyt dyd myn hert so moche woo.
 "A, goode sir!" quod I, "say not soo!
 Have somme pitee on your nature
 That formed yow to creature, 715
 Remembre yow of Socrates,
 For he ne counted nat thre strees
 Of noght that Fortune koude doo."

"No," quod he, "I kan not soo."
 "Why so, good syr? parde," quod y, 720
 "Ne, say noght soo for trewely,
 Thogh ye had loste the ferses twelve,
 And ye for sorwe mordred yourselve,
 Ye sholde be dampned in this cas
 By as goode ryght as Medea was, 725
 That slowgh hir children for Jasoun,
 And Phyllis also for Demophoun
 Henge hirselfe, so weylaway!
 For he had broke his terme day
 To come to hir; another rage 730
 Had Dydo, the quene eke of Cartage,
 That slough hirselfe, for Eneas
 Was fals, which a foole she was!
 And Ecquo died for Narcisus
 Nolde nat love hir, and ryght thus 735
 Hath many another folly doon.
 And for Dalida died Sampson
 That slough hymselfe with a pilere.
 But ther is no man alyve here
 Wolde for a fers make this woo!" 740
 "Why so?" quod he, "hyt ys nat soo,
 Thou woste ful lytel what thou menyst,
 I have loste more than thow wenyst."
 "Loo, sir, how may that be," quod y,
 "Good sir, telle me al hooly 745
 In what wyse, how, why, and wherefore
 That ye have thus youre blysse lore."
 "Blythely," quod he, "come sytte adoun,
 I telle the up condicioun
 That thou shalt hooly with al thy wytte 750
 Doo thyn entent to herkene hitte."
 "Yis, syr." "Swere thy trouthe therto."

720 yis parde. 721 say om.; trewely. 744 sir how she that may.

749 hyt the up a.

"Gladly." "Do thanne holde hereto."
 "I shal ryght blythely, so God me save,
 Hooly, with al the witte I have, 755
 Here yow, as wel as I kan."
 "A Goddys halfe," quod he, and began;
 "Syr," quod he, "sith firste I kouthe
 Have any maner wytte fro youthe,
 Or kyndely understondynge 760
 To comprehende, in any thyng,
 What love was in myn oune wytte,
 Dredeles I have ever yitte
 Be tributarye, and yive rente
 To Love hooly with goode entente, 765
 And through plesaunce become his thralle,
 With good wille, body, hert, and alle.
 Al this I putte in his servage
 As to my lorde, and did homage,
 And ful devoutely I prayed hym to, 770
 He shulde besette myn herte so,
 That hyt plesance to hym were,
 And worshippe to my lady dere.
 And this was longe and many a yere
 Or that myn herte was set owhere, 775
 That I did thus, and nyste why,
 I trowe hit came me kyndely,
 Peraventure I was therto moste able
 As a white walle or a table;
 For hit ys redy to cacheche and take 780
 Al that men wil theryn make,
 Whethir so men wil portrey or peynte,
 Be the werkes never so queynte.
 And thilke tyme I ferde ryght so
 I was able to have lerned tho, 785
 And to have kende as wel or better,

Paraunter, other arte or letre;
 But for love came firste in my thoght,
 Therefore I forgate hyt noght.
 I ches love to my firste crafte, 790
 Therefore hit ys with me lafte;
 For why, I toke hyt of so yonge age,
 That malyce had my corage
 Nat that tyme turned to nothyng
 Tnorgh to mochel knowlachyng. 795
 For that tyme Yowthe, my maistresse,
 Governed me in ydelnesse,
 For hyt was in my firste youthe,
 And thoo ful lytel goode y couthe;
 For al my werkes were flyttyng 800
 That tyme, and al my thoght varyinge,
 Al were to me ylyche goode
 That I knewe thoo, but thus hit stooode.
 Hit happed, that I came on a day
 Into a place, ther that I say 805
 Trewly the fayrest companye
 Off ladyes, that evere man with ye
 Had seen togedres in oo place.
 Shal I clepe hyt happe other grace
 That broght me there? nay, but Fortune, 810
 That ys to lyen ful comune,
 The fals trayteresse pervers!
 God wolde I koude clepe hir wers,
 For now she worcheth me ful woo,
 And I wol tel sone why soo; 815
 Amonge these ladyes thus echon,
 Soth to seyne, sawgh y oon
 That was lyke noon of the route;
 For I dar swere, withoute doute,
 That as the somerys sonne bryghte 820

Ys fairer, clerer, and hath more lyghte
 Than any other planete in hevene,
 The moone, or the sterres sevene,
 For al the worlde, so had she
 Surmountede hem al of beaute, 825
 Of maner, and of comelynesse,
 Of stature, and of wel sette gladnesse,
 Of godelyhede so wel besey;
 Shortly what shal y more sey?
 By God, and by his halwes twelve 830
 Hyt was my swete, ryght al hir selve!
 She had so stedfaste countenaunce,
 So noble porte, and meyntenaunce;
 And Love, that had wel herd my boone,
 Had espyed me thus soone, 835
 That she ful sone, in my thoght,
 As helpe me God, so was y-kaught
 So sodenly, that I ne toke
 No maner counseyl, but at hir loke,
 And at myn hert; for why, hir eyen 840
 So gladly, I trow, myn herte seyen,
 That purely tho myn oun thoght
 Seyde hit were beter serve hir for noght
 Than with another to be wel.
 And hyt was sothe, for everedel 845
 I wil anoon-ryght telle the why:
 I sawgh hyr daunce so comelely,
 Carole and synge so swetly,
 Lawghe and pley so womanly,
 And loke so debonairly, 850
 So goodely speke, and so frendly,
 That certes y trowe, that evermore
 Nas seyne so blysful a tresore.

827 of so. 828 and so. 829 more om. 830 *His om.* 840 *And But; hert hest*
 853 so a.

For every heer on hir hede,
 Soth to seyne, hyt was not rede, 855
 Ne nouthur yelowē, ne broune hyt nas,
 Me thoghte most lyke gold hyt was
 And which eyen my lady hadde!
 Debonair, goode, glade, and sadde,
 Symple, of goode mochel, noght to wyde; 860
 Therto hir looke nas not asyde
 Ne overthwert, but besette so wele
 Hyt drewh and tooke up, everydele,
 Al that on hir gan beholde.
 Hir eyen semed anoon, she wolde 865
 Have mercy—foolys wenden soo,
 But hyt was never the rather doo!
 Hyt nas no countrefeted thyngē,
 Hyt was hir oune pure lokyngē,
 That the goddesse, Dame Nature, 870
 Had made hem opene by mesure
 And cloos; for were she never so glad,
 Hyr lokyngē was not foly sprad,
 Ne wildely, thogh that she pleyde;
 But ever me thought hir eyen seyde 875
 'Be God, my wrathe ys al foryive!'
 Therwith hir lyste so wel to lyve,
 That dulnesse was of hir adrad;
 She nas to sobre, ne to glad.
 In alle thynges more mesure 880
 Had never, I trow, creature.
 But many oon with hire loke she herte,
 And that sate hyr ful lytel at herte.
 For she knewe nothyngē of her thought,
 But whither she knew, or knew it nowght, 885
 Algate she ne rought of hem a stree.
 To gete hyr love noo nerre was he

That woned at home, than he in Ynde;
 The formest was alway behynde.
 But goode folke over al other 890
 She loved, as man may do hys brother,
 Of whiche love she was wounder large
 In skilful placis that bere charge.

But which a visage had she thertoo!
 Allas, myn hert ys wonder woo 895.
 That I ne kan discryven hyt!
 Me lakketh both Englyssh and wit
 For to undo hyt at the fulle;
 And eke my spiritis be so dulle
 So grete a thyng for to devyse. 900
 I have no witte that kan suffise
 To comprehende hir beaute,
 But thus moche dar I sayn, that she
 Was rody, fressh, and lyvely hewed;
 And every day hir beaute newed, 905
 And negh hir face was alderbest;
 For certys Nature had swich lest
 To make that faire, that trewly she
 Was hir chefe patrone of beaute,
 And chefe ensample of al hir werke, 910
 And moustre; for, be hyt never so derke,
 Me thynkyth I se hir evermoo.
 And yet moreover, thogh al thoo
 That ever levede were now alyve,
 Ne sholde ha founde to diskryve 915
 Yn al hir face a wikked sygne,
 For hit was sad, symple, and benygne.

And which a goodely softe speche
 Had that swete, my lyves leche,
 So frendely, and so wel ygrounded, 920
 Up al resoun so wel yfounded,

And so trefable to al goode,
That I dar swere wel by the roode
Of eloquence was never founde
So swete a sownynge facounde, 925
Ne trewer tonged, ne skorned lasse,
Ne bet koude hele, that by the masse
I durste swere, thogh the Pape hit songe,
That ther was never yet throgh hir tonge
Man ne woman gretely harmed. 930
As for hir, hit was al harme hyd;
Ne lasse flaterynge in hir word,
That purely hir symple recorde
Was founde as trewe as any bonde
Or trouthe of any mannys honde. 935
Ne chyde she koude never a dele,
That knoweth al the worlde ful wele.
But swiche a fairenesse of a nekke
Had that swete, that boon nor brekke
Nas ther non seen that mys-satte. 940
Hyt was white, smothe, streght, and pure flatte,
Wythouten hole; or canel-boon,
As be semynge, had she noon,
Hyr throte, as I have now memoyre,
Semed a rounde toure of yvoyre, 945
Of goode gretenesse, and noght to grete.
And goode faire White she hete,
That was my lady name, ryghte.
She was bothe faire and bryghte,
She had not hir name wronge; 950
Ryght faire shuldres, and body longe
She had, and armes; every lyth
Fattyssh, flesschy, not grete therwith,
Ryght white handes, and nayles rede;
Rounde brestes, and of good brede 955

Hyr hippes were, a streight flat bakke.
 I knewe on hir noon other lakke,
 That al hir lymmes nere pure sywyng
 In as ferre as I had knowyng.
 Therto she koude so wel pley, 960
 Whan that hir lyst, that I dar sey
 That she was lyke to torche bryght
 That every man may take of lyght
 Ynogh, and hyt hathe never the lesse.
 Of maner and of comlynesse 965
 Ryght so ferde my lady dere;
 For every wight of hir manere
 Myght cachche ynogh, yif that he wolde,
 Yif he had eyen hir to beholde;
 For I dar swere wel, yif that she 970
 Had amonge ten thousande be,
 She wolde have be, at the lest,
 A chefe meroure of al the fest,
 Thogh they had stonde in a rowe,
 To mennys eyen koude have knowe. 975
 For wher so men had pleyed or wakyed,
 Me thoght the felysshyppe as naked
 Withouten hir, that sawgh I oones,
 As a corowne withoute stones.
 Trewly she was to myn eye 980
 The soleyne Fenix of Arabye,
 For ther levyth nevyr but oon;
 Ne swich as she ne knowe I noon.
 To speke of godenesse, trewly, she
 Had as moche debonairyete 985
 As ever had Hester in the Bible,
 And more, yif more were possyble.
 And sothe to seyne, therwythalle
 She had a wytte so generalle,

So hoole enclyned to alle goode, 990
That al hir wytte was set, by the rode,
Withoute malyce, upon gladnesse.
And therto I sawgh never yet a lesse
Harmeful than she was in doynge.
I sey nat that she ne had knowynge 995
What harme was, or elles she
Had koude no good, so thenketh me.
And trewly, for to speke of trouthe
But she had hadde, hyt hadde be routhe;
Therof she had so moche hyr dele, 1000
And I dar seyn, and swere hyt wele,
That Trouthe hymselfe over al and alle
Had chose hys maner principalle
In hir, that was his restynge place.
Therto she hadde the moste grace 1005
To have stedefaste perseveraunce
And esy atemptry governaunce
That ever I knewe, or wyste yitte,
So pure suffraunt was hir wytte.
And reson gladly she understoode; 1010
Hyt folowed wel she koude goode.
She used gladly to do wel,
These were hir maners everydel;
Therwith she loved so wel ryght,
She wronge do wolde to no wyght, 1015
No wyght myght doo hir noo shame,
She loved so wel hir oun name
Hyr lust to holde no wyght in honde,
Ne, be thou siker, she wolde not fonde
To holde no wyght in balaunce 1020
By halfe worde, ne by countenaunce,
But yif men wolde upon hir lye;
Ne sende men into Walakye,
To Pruyse, and into Tartarye,

To Alysaundre, ne into Turkye, 1025
 And byd hym faste anoon, that he
 Goo hoodeles to the drye se,
 And come home by the Carrenare,
 And sey, 'Sir, be now ryght ware,
 That I may of yow here seyn 1030
 Worshyppe, or that ye come ageyn.'
 She ne used no suche knakkes smale.
 But wherfore that y tel my tale?
 Ryght on thys same, as I have seyde,
 Was hooly al my love leyde; 1035
 For certes, she was, that swete wife,
 My suffisaunce, my luste, my lyfe,
 Myn happe, myn hele, and al my blysse,
 My worldys welfare and my lisse,
 And I hooly hires, and everydel!" 1040
 "By oure lord," quod I, "y trowe yow wel,
 Hardely, your love was wel besette.
 I not how ye myght have doo bette."
 "Bette? ne no wyght so wele," quod he,
 "Y trowe hyt wel, sir," quod I, "parde!" 1045
 "Nay, leve hyt wel!" "Sire, so do I;
 I leve yow wel, that trewly
 Yow thoghte, that she was the best,
 And to be-holde the alderfayrest,
 Who soo had loked hir with your eyen." 1050
 "With myn? nay, al that hir seyen
 Seyde and swore hyt was soo;
 And thogh they ne hadde, I wolde thoo
 Have loved best my lady free.
 Thogh I had hadde al the Beaute 1055
 That ever had Alcipyades,
 And al the strengthe of Ercules,
 And therto had the worthynesse

Of Alysaunder, and al the rychesse
 That ever was in Babyloyne, 1060
 In Cartage, or in Macedoyne,
 Or in Rome, or in Nynyve;
 And to also as hardy be
 As was Ector, so have I joye,
 That Achilles slough at Troye— 1065
 And therfore was he slayn alsoo,
 In a temple, for bothe twoo
 Were slayne, he and Antylegyus—
 And so seyth Dares Frygius,
 For love of Polixena; 1070
 Or ben as wis as Mynerva,
 I wolde ever, withoute drede,
 Have loved hir, for I most nede.
 Nede? nay, trewly, I gabbe now;e;
 Noght 'nede,' and I wol telle howe; 1075
 For of goode wille myn hert hyt wolde,
 And eke to love hir I was holde
 As for the fairest and the beste.
 She was as good, so have I reste,
 As ever was Penolopee of Grece, 1080
 Or as the noble wife Lucrece,
 That was the best, he telleth thus,
 The Romayne, Tytus Lyvyus.
 She was as good, and nothyng lyke,
 Thogh hir stories be autentyke; 1085
 Algate she was as trewe as she—
 But wherfore that I telle the?

Whan I firste my lady say,
 I was ryght yonge, sothe to say,
 And ful grete nede I hadde to lerne; 1090
 Whan my herte wolde yerne
 To love, hyt was a grete empryse.
 But as my wytte koude beste suffise,

After my yonge childely wytte,
 Withoute drede, I besette hytte, 1095
 To love hir in my beste wyse
 To do hir worshippe, and the servise
 That I koude thoo, be my trouthe,
 Withoute feynynge outhur slouthe;
 For wonder feyne I wolde hir se, 1100
 So mochel hyt amended me,
 That whan I sawgh hir first a-morwe
 I was warished of al my sorwe,
 Of al day after til hyt were eve;
 Me thoghte nothyng myghte me greve 1105
 Were my sorwes never so smerte.
 And yet she sytte so myn herte,
 That by my trouthe y nolde noght,
 For ay thys worlde, oute of my thoght
 Leve my lady, noo, trewly!" 1110
 "Now by my trouthe, sir," quod I,
 "Me thynketh ye have suche a chaunce
 As shryfte wythoute repentaunce."
 "Repentaunce? nay, fy!" quod he,
 "Shulde y now repente me 1115
 To love? nay, certis, than were I wel
 Wers than was Achetofel,
 Or Anthenor, so have I joye,
 The traytore that betrayes Troye;
 Or the false Genelloun, 1120
 He that purchased the tresoun
 Of Rowlande and of Olyvere.
 Nay, while I am alyve here,
 I nyl foryete hir never moo."
 "Now, good syr," quod I, as thoo, 1125
 "Ye han wel tolde me here before,
 Hyt ys no nede to reherse more,

How ye sawgh hir firste, and where;
 But wolde ye tel me the manere
 To hire which was your first speche? 1130
 Therof I wolde yow beseche;
 And how she knewe first your thoght,
 Whether ye loved hir or noght;
 And telleth me eke what ye have lore
 I herde yow telle herebefore." 1135

"Yee," he seyde, "thow nost what thou menyst;
 I have lost more than thou wenyst."

"What losse ys that?" quod I thoo.
 "Nyl she not love yow? ys hyt soo?
 Or have ye oght doon amys, 1140
 That she hathe lefte yow, ys hyt this?
 For Goddys love, telle me alle."

"Before God," quod he, "and I shalle.
 I say ryght as I have seyde,
 On hir was al my love leyde, 1145
 And yet she nyste hyt never a del
 Noght longe tyme, leve hyt wel.
 For be ryght siker, I durste noght
 For al this worlde tel hir my thoght,
 Ne I wolde have wraththed hir, trewly. 1150
 For wostow why, she was lady
 Of the body, she had the hert,
 And who hath that may not astert.
 But, for to kepe me fro ydelnesse,
 Trewly I did my besynesse 1155
 To make songes, as I best koude,
 And ofte tyme I songe hem loude,
 And made songes this a grete dele,
 Al thogh I koude not make so wele
 Songes, ne knowe the arte alle 1160
 As koude Lamekys sone, Tuballe,

That founde out firste the art of songe;
 For as hys brothres hamers ronge
 Upon hys anvelet, up and down,
 Therof he tooke the first soun. 1165

But Grekes seyn Pictagoras,
 That he the firste fynder was
 Of the arte; Aurora telleth soo,
 But therof no fors of hem twoo. 1170
 Algatis, songes thus I made
 Of my felynge, myn hert to glade,
 And loo, this was myn alther-first—
 I not wher hyt were the werst—

'Lorde, hyt maketh myn herte lyght
 Whan I thenke on that swete wyght 1175
 That is so semely on to see;
 And wisshe to God, hit myght so bee
 That she wolde holde me for hir knyght,
 My lady, that is so faire and bryght!

Now have I tolde, the sothe to say, 1180
 My firste songe. Upon a day
 I bethoghte me what woo
 And sorwe that I suffred thoo
 For hir, and yet she wyst hyt noght,
 Ne tel hir durst I nat my thoght. 1185
 'Allas,' thoght I, 'y kan no rede!
 And, but I telle hir, I nam but dede.
 And yif I telle hyr, to sey ryght sothe,
 I am adred she wol be wrothe.
 Allas, what shal I thanne doo?' 1190
 In this debate I was so woo
 Me thoght myn herte brast a-tweyne.
 So at the laste, sothe to sayne,

1167 first. 1172 *myn om.*; *this thus*. 1174 hert. 1181 first. 1182 bethoght.
 1187 am. 1192 hert. 1193 last.

I be-thoght me, that nature
 Ne formed never in creature 1195
 So moche Beaute, trewely
 And bounte, wythoute mercy.
 In hope of that, my tale I tolde
 With sorwe, as that I never sholde;
 For nedys, and mawgree my hede, 1200
 I most have tolde hir, or be dede.
 I not wel how that I beganne—
 Ful evel reherse hyt I kan—
 And eke, as helpe me God withalle,
 I trowe hyt was in the dismalle 1205
 That was the ten woundes of Egipte;
 For many a worde I overskipte
 In my tale, for pure fere
 Lest my wordys mys-sette were.
 With sorweful herte, and woundes dede, 1210
 Softe and quakyng for pure drede
 And shame, and styntyng in my tale
 For ferde, and myn hewe al pale,
 Ful ofte I wexe bothe pal and rede.
 Bowyng to hir I heng the hede— 1215
 I durste nat ones loke hir on—
 For witte, maner, and al was goon.
 I seyde 'mercy!' and no more.
 Hyt nas no game, hyt sate me sore.
 So at the laste, sothe to seyne, 1220
 Whan that myn hert was come ageyne,
 To telle shortely al my speche,
 With hool herte I gan hir beseche
 That she wolde be my lady swete;
 And swore, and gan hir hertely hete 1225
 Ever to be stedfast and trewe,
 And love hir alwey fresshly newe,

And never other lady have,
 And al hir worshippe for to save.
 As I best koude, I swore hir this, 1230
 'For youres is alle, that ever ther ys,
 For evermore, myn herte swete,
 And never to false yow, but I mete,
 I nyl, as wysse God helpe me soo !'
 And whan I had my tale ydoo, 1235
 God wote, she acounted nat a stree
 Of al my tale, so thoghte me !
 To telle shortly ryght as hyt ys,
 Trewly hir answare, hyt was this—
 I kan not now wel counterfete 1240
 Hyr wordys, but this was the grete
 Of hir answare, she sayde 'nay !'
 Alle outerly, alas, that day !
 The sorowe I suffred, and the woo
 That trewly Cassandra, that soo 1245
 Bewayled the destruccioun
 Of Troy and of Ilyoun
 Had never swich sorwe as I thoo.
 I durst no more say ther-too
 For pure fere, but stale away; 1250
 And thus I lyved ful many a day,
 That trewely I hadde no nede
 Ferther than my beddes hede
 Never a day to seche sorwe.
 I fonde hyt redy every morwe, 1255
 For why, I loved hyr in no gere.
 So hit befel another yere,
 I thoughte ones I wolde fonde
 To do hir knowe and understonde
 My woo, and she wel understode 1260
 That I ne wilned no thyng but gode

And worshippe, and to kepe hir name
 Over alle thynges, and dred hir shame,
 And was so besy hyr to serve,
 And pitee were I shulde sterve, 1265
 Syth that I wilned noon harme, ywys.
 So whan my lady knewe al thys
 My lady yaf me al hooly
 The noble yifte of hir mercy,
 Savynge hir worshippe by al weyes, 1270
 Dredles, I mene noon other weyes.
 And therwith she yaf me a rynge,
 I trowe hyt was the first thyng.
 But yif myn hert was iwaxe
 Gladde, that is no nede to axe. 1275
 As helpe me God, I was as blyve
 Reysed as fro dethe to lyve,
 Of al happes the alderbeste,
 The gladdest, and the moste at reste;
 For trewely that swete wyght, 1280
 Whan I had wrong and she the ryght,
 She wolde alway so goodely
 Foryeve me so debonairely,
 In al my yowthe, in alle chaunce,
 She tooke me in hir governaunce. 1285
 Therwyth she was alway so trewe
 Our joye was ever-glyche newe.
 Oure hertys werne so evene a payre
 That never nas that oon contrarye
 To that other, for noo woo. 1290
 For sothe glyche they suffred thoo
 Oo blysse and eke oo sorwe bothe;
 Ylyche they were, bothe glad and wrothe;
 Al was us oon, withoute were;
 And thus we lyved ful many a yere 1295

So wel, I kan nat telle how!"

"Sir," quod I, "where is she now?"

"Now!" quod he, and stynte anoon. . . .

Therwith he waxe as dede as stoon,

And seyde, "Allas, that I was bore!" 1300

That was the losse that here before

I tolde the, that I hadde lorne.

Bethenke how I seyde herebeforne

'Thow wost ful lytel what thow menyst,

I have lost more than thow wenyst,' 1305

God wote, allas, ryght that was she!"

"Allas, sir, how? what may that be?"

"She ys ded!" "nay!" "Yis, be my trouthe!"

"Is that youre losse? be God, hyt ys routhe!"

And with that worde, ryght anoon 1310

They gan to strake forth, al was doon,

For that tyme the herte huntynge.

With that me thoghte that this kyng

Anoon gan homewarde for to ryde

Unto a place was there besyde, 1315

Which was from us but a lyte,

A longe castel, with wallys white,

Be seynt Johan, on a ryche hille,

As me mette; but thus hyt fille—

Ryght thus me mette, as I yow telle— 1320

That in the castell ther was a belle,

As hyt hadde smyten oures twelve.

Therewyth I awooke my selve,

And fonde me lyng in my bedde,

And the booke that I hadde redde 1325

Of Alcione and Seys the kyng

And of the goddys of slepyng,

I fond hyt in myn honde ful evene.

Thoght I, "Thys ys so queynt a swevene

That I wol, be processe of tyme,

1330

Fonde to put this swevene in ryme

As I kan best, and that anoon."

This was my swevene, now hit ys doon.

Explicit the Boke of the Duchesse.

THE COMPLAYNT OF MARS

(1)

"Gladeth, ye foules, of the morowe gray,
Loo, Venus! rysen amonge yon rowes rede;
And floures fressh, honouren ye this day,
For when the sunne uprist then wol ye sprede.
But ye lovers, that lye in eny drede, 5
Fleeth, lest wikked tonges yow espye,
Loo, yonde the sunne, the candel of jalosye.

(2)

Wyth teres blew, and with a wounded hert
Taketh your leve, and with seynt John to borowe
Apeseth sumwhat of your sorowes smert; 10
Tyme cometh efte that cese shal your sorowe,
The glade nyght ys worthe an hevy morowe."
Seynt Valentyne, a foule thus herd I synge
Upon your day, er sunne gan up-sprynge.

(3)

Yet sange this foule, "I rede yow al a wake, 15
And ye that han not chosen in humble wyse,
Without repentyng cheseth yow your make;
And ye that han ful chosen as I devise,
Yet at this fest renoveleth your servyse,
Confermeth hyt perpetuely to dure, 20
And patiently taketh your aventure.

(4)

And for the worship of this highe fest
Yet wol I, in my briddes wise, synge

1 of on; foules lovers. 2 yon yow. 3 ye the. 4 ye they. 9 sent. 12 glad.

The sentence of the compleynt, at the lest,
 That woful Mars made atte departyng 25
 Fro fresshe Venus in a morwnyng,
 Whan Phebus with his firy torches rede
 Ransaked every lover in hys drede.—”

(5)

Whilom the thridde hevenes lord above
 As wel by hevenysh revolucioun 30
 As by desert, hath wonne Venus his love,
 And she hath take him in subjeccioun,
 And as a maistresse taught him his lessoun,
 Commaundyng him that nevere in her servise
 He ner so bolde no lover to dispise. 35

(6)

For she forbad him jelosye at alle,
 And cruelte, and bost, and tyrannye,
 She made him at her lust so humble and talle
 That when her deyned to cast on hym her ye,
 He toke in pacience to lyve or dye; 40
 And thus she brydeleth him in her maner
 With nothing but with scourging of her cher.

(7)

Who regneth now in blysse but Venus,
 That hath thys worthy knyght in governaunce?
 Who syngeth now but Mars, that serveth thus 45
 The faire Venus causer of plesaunce?
 He bynt him to perpetuall obeisaunce,
 And she bynt her to loven him for ever,
 But so be that his trespase hyt desever.

(8)

Thus be they knyht, and regnen as in heven 50
 Be loking moost;—til hyt fil on a tyde
 That by her bothe assent was set a steven
 That Mars shal entre as fast as he may glyde
 Into hir nexte paleys to abyde,
 Walkynge hys cours til she had him atake, 55
 And he preiede her to haste her for his sake.

(9)

Then seyde he thus, "Myn hertis lady suete,
 Ye knowe wel my myscheffe in that place,
 For sikirly til that I with yow mete,
 My lyfe stant ther in aventure and grace; 60
 But when I se the Beaute of your face,
 Ther ys no dred of deth may do me smert,
 For alle your lust is ese to myn hert."

(10)

She hath so grete compassion on her knyght
 That dwelleth in solitude til she come, 65
 For hyt stode so that ylke tyme no wight
 Counseyled hym, ne seyde to hym welcome
 That nyghe her witte for sorowe was overcome,
 Wherefore she sped her as fast in her wey
 Almost in oon day as he dyd in twey. 70

(11)

The grete joye that was betwex hem two
 When they be mette, ther may no tunge tel,
 Ther is no more, but unto bed thei go,
 And thus in joy and blysse I let hem duel,
 This worthi Mars, that is of knyghthode wel, 75
 The flour of feyrenesse lappeth in his armes,
 And Venus kysseth Mars the god of armes.

(12)

Sojourned hath this Mars, of which I rede,
 In chambre amynd the paleys prively
 A certeyn tyme, til him fel a drede 80
 Throgh Phebus, that was comen hastely
 Within the paleys yates ful sturdely
 With torche in honde, of which the stremes bryght
 On Venus chambre knockeden ful lyght.

(13)

The chambre ther as ley this fresshe quene 85
 Depeynted was with white boles grete,
 And by the lyght she knew, that shone so shene,
 That Phebus cam to bren hem with his hete.
 This cely Venus, nygh dreynt in teres wete,
 Enbraceth Mars and seyde, "alas, I dye, 90
 The torch is come that al this world wol wrie."

(14)

Up sterte Mars, hym luste not to slepe,
 When he his lady herde so compleyne;
 But for his nature was not for to wepe,
 In stid of teres, fro his eyen tweyne 95
 The firi sparkes brosten out for peyne;
 And hent his hauberke that ley hym besyde;
 Fle wold he not, ne myght himselven hide.

(15)

He throweth on his helme of huge wyght,
 And girt him with his swerde; and in his honde 100
 His myghty spere, as he was wont to fyght,
 He shaketh so that almost hit towonde;
 Ful hevy was he to walken over londe,
 He may not holde with Venus companye,
 But bad her fleen, lest Phebus her espye. 105

(16)

O woful Mars! alas, what maist thou seyn,
 That in the paleys of thy disturbaunce
 Art left byhynde, in peril to be sleyn;
 And yet therto ys double thy penaunce,
 For she that hath thyn hert in governaunce 110
 Is passed halfe the stremes of thin yen,
 That thou ner swift, wel maist thou wepe and crien!

(17)

Now fleeth Venus into Cilinios toure,
 With voide cours, for fere of Phebus lyght.
 Alas, and ther ne hath she no socoure, 115
 For she ne founde ne saugh no maner wyght;
 And eke as ther she had but litil myght,
 Wherfor, herselven for to hyde and save,
 Within the gate she fledde into a cave.

(18)

Derke was this cave, and smokyng as the hel, 120
 Not but two pas within the yate hit stode.
 A naturel day in derk I let her duel;
 Now wol I speke of Mars, furieuse and wode,
 For sorow he wold have sene his herte blode,
 Sith that he myght done her no companye, 125
 He ne roghte not a myte for to dye.

(19)

So feble he wex for hete and for his wo,
 That nygh he swelt, he myght unnethe endure.
 He passeth but a steyre in dayes two;
 But ner the lesse, for al his hevvy armure, 130
 He foloweth her that is his lyves cure,
 For whos departyng he toke gretter ire
 Then for al his brennyng in the fire.

108 art thou. 114 *with* wich. 115 *ne* om. 119 *fledde* fel. 121 *pas* pales.
 124 hert. 125 have done. 126 thought. 129 *steyre* sterre.

(20)

After he walketh softly a paas,
 Compleynyng, that hyt pite was to here. 135
 He seyde, "O lady bryght, Venus, alas,
 That evere so wyde a compas ys my spere!
 Alas when shal I mete yow, herte dere?
 This twelve dayes of Apprile I endure
 Throgh jelouse Phebus this mysaventure." 140

(21)

Now God helpe sely Venus allone!
 But as God wolde, hyt happed for to be
 That while that Venus weping made her mone
 Cilinius, rydinge in his chevache,
 Fro Venus valaunse myght his paleys se, 145
 And Venus he salueth, and maketh chere,
 And her receyveth as his frende ful dere.

(22)

Mars dwelleth forth in his adversyte,
 Compleynyng ever on her departyng;
 And what his compleynt was, remembreth me; 150
 And therefore, in this lusty morwnyng,
 As I best can, I wol hit seyn and synge,
 And after that I wol my leve take,
 And God yif every wyght joy of his make!

The compleynt of Mars.

The ordre of compleynt requireth skylfully 155
 That yf a wight shal pleyne petously,
 Ther mot be cause, wherfore that men pleyn,
 Other men may deme he pleyneth folely
 And causeles; alas, that am not I!

Werfor the grounde and cause of al my peyn, 160
 So as my troubled witte may hit ateyn,
 I wol reherse, not for to have redresse,
 But to declare my grounde of hevynesse.

[*First Tern.*]

The first tyme, alas, that I was wroght,
 And for certeyn effectes hider broght 165
 Be him that lordeth ech intelligence,
 I yaf my trwe servise and my thoght
 For ever-more, how dere I have hit boght,
 To her that is of so gret excelence,
 That what wight that first sheweth his presence, 170
 When she is wrothe, and taketh of hym no cure,
 He may not longe in joye of love endure.

This is no feyned mater that I telle;
 My lady is the verrey sours and welle
 Of beaute, lust, fredam, and gentilnesse, 175
 Of riche aray, how dere men hit selle,
 Of al disport, in which men frendly duelle,
 Of love and pley, and of benigne humblesse,
 Of sounne of instrumentes of al suetnesse,
 And therto so wel fortunèd and thewed, 180
 That thorow the worlde her goodnesse is yshewed.

What wonder ys then, thogh that I beset
 My servise on such on that may me knet
 To wele or wo, sith hit lythe in her myght? .
 Therefore my hert for ever I to her het, 185
 Ne truly, for my dethe, I shal not let
 To ben her truest servaunt and her knyght.
 I flater noght, that may wete every wyght;
 For this day in her servise shal I dye,
 But grace be I se her ones wyth ye. 190

[*Second Tern.*]

To whom shal I than pleyn of my distresse?
 Who may me helpe? who may my harme redresse?

Shal I compleyn unto my lady fre?

Nay, certes, for she hath such hevynesse,
 For fere and eke for wo, that, as I gesse, 195
 In lytil tyme hit wol her bane be.

But were she safe, hit wer no fors of me.

Alas, that ever lovers mote endure,
 For love, so many a perilouse aventure!

For tho so be, that lovers be as trewe 200
 As eny metal that is forged newe,

In mony a case hem tydeth ofte sorowe,
 Somtyme her ladies wil not on hem rewe;
 Somtyme, yf that jelosie hyt knewe,

They myghten lyghtly ley her hede to borowe; 205

Somtyme envymous folke, with tungen horowe,
 Departen hem, alas, whom may they plese?
 But he be fals, no lover hath his ese.

But what availeth suche a longe sermoun
 Of adventures of love up and doune? 210

I wol returne, and speken of my peyne;
 The poynt is this, of my distruccioun
 My righte lady, my savacyoun,

Is in affray, and not to whom to pleyn.

O herte suete, O lady sovereyn, 215

For your disese I oght wel swowne and swelt,
 Thogh I none other harme ne drede felt.

[*Third Tern.*]

To what fyne made the god that sitte so hye,
 Be-nethen him love other companye,

And streyneth folke to love malgre her hede? 220

And then her joy, for oght I can espye,
 Ne lasteth not the twynkelyng of an eye;
 And somme han never joy til they be dede.
 What meneth this? what is this mystihede?
 Wherto constreyneth he his folke so fast 225
 Thing to desyre but hit shulde last?

And thogh he made a lover love a thing,
 And maketh hit seme stidfast and during,
 Yet putteth he in hyt such mysaventure,
 That reste nys ther noon in his yevinge. 230
 And that is wonder, that so juste a kynge
 Doth such hardnesse to his creature.
 Thus, whether love breke or elles dure,
 Al gates he that hath with love to done,
 Hath ofter wo then changed ys the mone. 235

Hit semeth he hath to lovers enemyte,
 And lyke a fissher, as men alday may se,
 Bateth hys angle-hoke with summe plesaunce,
 Til mony a fissch ys wode to that he be
 Sesed ther-with, and then at erst hath he 240
 Al his desire, and ther-with al myschaunce;
 And thogh the lyne breke, he hath penaunce,
 For with the hoke he wounded is so sore,
 That he his wages hathe for evermore.

[*Fourth Tern.*]

The broche of Thebes was of such a kynde, 245
 So ful of rubies and of stones ynde,
 That every wight that set on hit an ye,
 He wend anon to worthe out of his mynde,
 So sore the Beaute wold his herte bynde.
 Til he hit had, him thoght he muste dye; 250

And whan that hit was his, then shuld he drye
Such woo for drede, ay while that he hit had,
That welnygh for the fere he shulde mad.

And whan hit was fro his possessioun,
Then had he double wo and passioun, 255
For he so feir a tresore had forgo;
But yet this broche, as in conclusioun
Was not the cause of this confusioun,
But he that wroght hit, enfortuned hit so,
That every wight that had hit shuld have wo; 260
And therfore in the worcher was the vice,
And in the covetour that was so nyce.

So fareth hyt by lovers and by me,
For thogh my lady have so gret beaute
That I was mad til I had gete her grace, 265
She was not cause of myn adversite,
But he that wroght her, also mot I the,
That putte suche a beaute in her face
That made me coveten and purchase
Myn ounne dethe, him wite I that I dye, 270
And myn unwitte, that ever I clombe so hye.

[*Fifth Tern.*]

But to yow, hardy knyghtis of renoun,
Syn that ye be of my devisioun,
Al be I not worthy to so grete a name,
Yet seyn these clerkes, I am your patroun; 275
Therefore ye oght have somme compassioun
Of my disese, and take hit not agame.
The pruddest of yow may be made ful tame;
Wherfore I prey yow of your gentillesse,
That ye compleyne for myn hevynesse. 280

251 *that, his om.* 253 *shuld.* 259 *enfortune.* 267 *also as.* 268 *put; a om.*
271 *ovne witte.* 280 *compleyn.*

And ye, my ladyes, that ben true and stable,
 Be wey of kynde, ye oghten to be able
 To have pite of folke that be in peyn.
 Now have ye cause to clothe yow in sable,
 Sith that youre emperise, the honourable, 285
 Is desolat, wel oghte ye to pleyne,
 Now shuld your holy teres falle and reyne.
 Alas, your honour and your emperise,
 Negh ded for drede, ne can her not chevisse.

Compleyneth eke, ye lovers, al in fere, 290
 For her that with unfeyned humble chere,
 Was evere redy to do yow socoure;
 Compleyneth her that evere hath had yow dere;
 Compleyneth beaute, fredom, and manere;
 Compleyneth her that endeth your labour; 295
 Compleyneth thilke ensample of al honour
 That never did but alway gentillesse;
 Kytheth therfor on her summe kyndenesse.

THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

Here begynyth the parlement of ffoulys.

The lyf so short, the craft so longe to lerne,
Thassay so sharp, so hard the conquerynge,
The dredful joye alwey that slit so yerne,
Al this mene I be Love, that my felynge
Astonyd with his wondrousful werkyng 5
So sore, Iwis, that whan I on hym thynke,
Nat wot I wel wher that I flete or synke.

For al be that I knowe nat Love indede,
Ne wot how that he quitith folk here hyre,
Yit happith me ful ofte in bokis reede 10
Of hise myraklis and his crewel yre,
That rede I wel, he wole be lord and syre.
I dar nat seyn, his strokis been so sore,
But God save swich a lord! I sey namoore.

Of usage, what for lust and what for lore, 15
On bokis rede I ofte, as I yow tolde.
But wherfore that I speke al this? nat yooore
Agon, it happede me for to beholde
Upon a bok was wrete with letteris olde,
And therupon, a certeyn thing to lerne, 20
The longe day ful faste I redde and yerne.

For oute of olde feldys, as men sey,
Comyth al this newe corn from yer to yere,
And out of olde bokis, in good fey,
Comyth al this newe science that men lere. 25
But now to purpos as of this matere;
To rede forth so gan me to delite
That al that day me thoughte but a lyte.

This bok of which I make of mencion
 Entytlt was al thus, as I schal telle, 30
 "Tullyus of the drem of Scipioun."

Chapiteris sevene it hadde, of hevene and helle
 And erthe, and soulis that therynne dwelle,
 Of whiche, as shortly as I can it trete,
 Of his centence I wele yow seyn the greeete. 35

Fyrst tellith it, whan Scipion was come
 In Affrik, how he metyth Massynisse,
 That hym for joie in armys hath inome.
 Thanne tellyth he here speche, and of the blysse
 That was betwixsyn hem til that day gan mysse; 40
 And how his auncestre, Affrycan so deere,
 Gan in his slep that nyght to hym apere.

Thanne tellith it, that from a sterry place
 How Affrycan hath hym Cartage schewid,
 And warnede hym befor of al his grace; 45
 And seyde, what man lernyd other lewid
 That lovede comoun profyt wel ithewid,
 He shulde into a blysful place wende,
 There as joye is, that last withoutyn ende.

Thanne axede he, if folk that now been dede 50
 Han lyf and dwellynge in anothir place.
 And Affrican seyde, "ya, withoutyn drede,"
 And that oure present worldis lyvys space
 Nys but a maner deth, what weye we trace;
 And rightful folk schul gon aftyr they deye 55
 To hevene, and schewede hym the galaxy.

Thanne shewede he hym the litel erthe that here is
 At regard of the havenys quantite,
 And after shewede he hym the nyne speris,

And aftyr that, the melodye herde he 60
 That comyth of thilke speris thryes thre,
 That welle is of musik and melodye
 In this world here and cause of armonye.

Than bad he hym, syn erthe was so lyte
 And ful of torment and of harde grace, 65
 That he ne schulde hym in the world delyte,
 Thanne tolde he hym, in certeyn yeris space
 That every sterre schulde come into his place
 Ther it was ferst, and al schulde out of mynde
 That in this world is don of al mankynde. 70

Thanne preyede hym Cypyon to telle hym al
 The weye to come into that hevene blis.
 And he seyde, "Know thyself ferst inmortal,
 And loke ay besyly thow werche and wysse
 To comoun profit, and thow shalt not mysse 75
 To comyn swiftly to this place deere
 That ful of blysse is and of soulys cleere.

But brekers of the lawe, soth to seyn,
 And lykerous folk, aftyr that they ben dede,
 Schul whirle aboute therthe alwey in peyne, 80
 Tyl manye a world be passid, out of drede,
 And that foryevyn is his weked dede.
 Than shal they comyn into this blysful place,
 To whiche to comyn, God the synde his grace."

The day gan faillen, and the derke nyght, 85
 That revith bestis from here besynesse,
 Berafte me my bok, for lak of lyght;
 And to my bed I gan me for to dresse,
 Fulfylde of thought and busy hevynesse;
 For bothe I hadde thyng which that I nolde 90
 And ek I ne hadde that thyng that I wolde.

65 was sumdel disseyvable & ful. 77 of (2) om. 78 brekeis. 80 there.
 84 the om.; his us. 85 folwyn. 88 bed self. 90 which om. 91 that (1) om.

But fynally, my spirit at the laste,
 Forwery of my labour al the day,
 Tok reste, that made me to slepe faste;
 And in my slep I mette, as that I lay, 95
 How Affrican, ryght in the same aray
 That Cipion hym say, byfore that tyde,
 Was come, and stod right at my bedis syde.

The wery hunttere, slepyng in his bed,
 To wode agen his mynde goth anon; 100
 The juge dremyth how hise pleis been sped;
 The cartere dremyth how his carte is gon;
 The riche of gold, the knyght fyght with his fon;
 The syke met he drynkyth of the tunne;
 The loveere met he hath his lady wonne. 105

Can I nat seyn if that the cause were
 For I hadde red of Affrican byforen,
 That made me to mete that he stod there;
 But thus seyde he, "Thow hast the so wel born
 In lokinge of myn olde bok byforn, 110
 Of whiche Macrobye roughte nat a lyte,
 That sumdel of thy labour wolde I quyte."

Cytherea, thow blysful lady swete,
 That with thy ferbrond dauntist whom thow lest,
 And madist me this swevene for to mete, 115
 Be thow myn helpe in this, for thow mayst best;
 As wisely as I seye the north-nor-west,
 Whan I began my swevene for to write,
 So yif me myght to ryme and ek tendyte.

This forseide Affrican me hente anon, 120
 And forth with hym unto a gate broughte
 Ryght of a park, wallid of grene ston,
 And ovyr the gatis with letteris large iwrowht,

There were vers iwreten as me thought,
 On eythir syde, of ful gret difference, 125
 Of which I schal now seyn the pleyn sentence.

“Thorw me men gon into that blysfyl place
 Of hertis hele, and dedly woundis cure;
 Thorw me men gon onto the welle of grace,
 There grene and lusty May shal evere endure; 130
 This is the weye to al good aventure,
 Be glad, thow redere, and thy sorwe ofcaste.
 Al opyn am I, passe in, and sped the faste!”

“Thorw me men gon,” than spak that othir side,
 “Onto the mortal strokis of the spere, 135
 Of whiche Disdayn and Daunger is the gyde,
 That nevere yit shal freut ne levys bere.
 This strem yow ledith to the sorweful were
 There as the fisch in prysoun is al drye;
 Theschewyng is only the remedye.” 140

These vers of gold and blak iwretyn were,
 Of whiche I gan astonyd to beholde,
 For whi, that on encresede ay my fere,
 And with that othir gan myn herte bolde;
 That on me hette, that othir dede me colde, 145
 No wit hadde I for errour for to chese
 To entre, or flen, or me to save, or lese.

Right as betwixsyn adamauntis two
 Of evene myght a pece of yryn set
 Ne hath no myght to meve too ne fro, 150
 For what that on may hale, that othir let,
 Ferde I, that nyste whethir me was bet
 To entre or leve, til Affrycan, my gide,
 Me hente, and shof in at the gatis wide.

124 iwrete. 132 overcaste. 134 spat. 138 *the om.* 140 Ther shewing.
 141 wers. 152 best.

And seyde, "It stant writyn in thy face 155
 Thyn errour, though thou telle it not to me;
 But dred the not to come into this place,
 For this writyng nys nothyng ment bi the,
 Ne by non, but he lovys serwaunt be,
 For thou of love hast lost thy stat, I gesse, 160
 As sek man hath of swet and byttyrnesse.

But natheles, althow that thou be dul,
 Yit that thou canst not do, yit mayst thou se,
 For manye a man that may nat stonde a pul,
 It likyth hym at wrastelyng for to be, 165
 And demyn yit wher he do bet, or he,
 And there if thou haddist cunnyng for tendite,
 I shal the shewe mater for to wryte."

With that myn hand he tok in his anon,
 Of whiche I confort kaughte, and went in faste; 170
 But Lord, so I was glad and wel-begoon!
 For overal where that I myne eyen caste
 Were treis, clad with levys that ay shal laste,
 Eche in his kynde of colour fresch and greene
 As emeroude, that joye was to seene. 175

The byldere ok, and ek the hardy assh;
 The pilere elm, the cofere unto carayne;
 The boxtre pipere; holm, to whippis lasch;
 The saylynge fyr; the cipresse, deth to pleyne;
 The shetere ew; the asp, for shaftys pleyne; 180
 The olyve of pes; and ek the dronke vyne;
 The victor palm; the laurer to devyne.

A gardyn saw I, ful of blosmy bowys,
 Upon a rever in a grene mede,
 There as that swetnesse everemore inow is, 185
 With flouris white, blewe, and yelwe, and rede,

And colde welle-stremys nothyng dede,
 That swemyn ful of smale fischis lighte,
 With fynmys rede and skalis sylvyr bryghte.

On every bow the bryddis herde I synge 190
 With voys of aungel in here armonye,
 Som besyede hem here bryddis forth to brynge;
 The litele conyes to here pley gunne hye;
 And ferthere al aboute I gan aspye
 The dredful ro, the buk and hert, and hynde, 195
 Squyrelis and bestis smale of gentil kynde.

Of instreumentis of strengis in acord
 Herde I so pleye, and ravyshyng swetnesse,
 That God, that makere is of al, and lord,
 Ne herde nevere betyr, as I gesse; 200
 Therwith a wynd, onethe it myght be lesse,
 Made in the levys grene a noyse softe,
 Acordaunt to the bryddis song alofte.

The eire of that place so attempre was
 That nevere was grevaunce of hot ne cold; 205
 There wex ek every holsum spice and gres;
 Ne no man may there waxe sek ne old,
 Yit was there joye more a thousent fold
 Than man can telle; ne nevere wolde it nyghte,
 But ay cler day to ony manys syghte. 210

Undyr a tre besyde a welle I say
 Cupide oure lord hise arwis forge and file,
 And at his fet his bowe al redy lay,
 And wel his doughtyr temperede al this whyle
 The hevedis in the welle, and with hire wile 215
 She couchede hem aftyr as they shulde serve,
 Some for to sle, and some to wounde and kerve.

Tho was I war of Plesaunce anon ryght,
 And of Aray and Lust and Curteysie,
 And of the Craft that can and hath the myght 220
 To don be force a wight to don folye;
 Disfigurat was she, I nyl nat lye,
 And by hemself undyr an ok, I gesse,
 Saw I Delyt that stod with Gentilesse.

I saw Beute, withoutyn ony atyr, 225
 And Youthe, ful of game, and Jolyte,
 Fool-hardynesse, and Flaterye, and Desyr,
 Messagerye, and Meede, and other thre,
 Here namys shul not here be told for me;
 And upon pileris greete of jasper longe, 230
 I saw a temple of bras ifounded stronge.

Aboute that temple daunsedyn alwey
 Wemen inowe, of whiche some ther were
 Fayre of hemself, and some of hem were gay,
 In kertelis al dischevele wente they there, 235
 That was here offys, alwey yer be yeere;
 And on the temple of dowvis white and fayre
 Saw I syttynge manye an hunderede peyre.

Byfore the temple dore ful sobyrly
 Dame Pes sat, with a curtyr in hire hond; 240
 And by hire syde, wondyr discretly,
 Dame Pacience syttynge there I fond,
 With face pale, upon an hil of sond,
 And aldirnext withinne and ek withoute
 Byheste and Art and of here folk a route. 245

Withinne the temple of sykys hoote as fuyr
 I herde a swow, that gan aboute renne,
 Whiche sikis were engenderede with desyr,

That madyn every auter for to brenne
 Of newe flaume, and wel espyed I thenne 250
 That alle the cause of sorwe that they drye
 Cam of the bittere goddesse Jelosye.

The god Priapus saw I, as I wente,
 Withinne the temple in sovereyn place stonde
 In swich aray as whan the asse hym shente 255
 With cri be nyghte, and with septure in his honde.
 Ful besyly men gunne asaye and fonde
 Upon his hed to sette of sundery hewe
 Garlondis ful of flourys fresche and newe.

And in a prive corner in desport, 260
 Fond I Venus and hire porter Richesse,
 That was ful noble and hautayn of hyre port;
 Derk was that place, but aftyrward lightnesse
 I saw a lyte, unnethe it myghte be lesse,
 And on a bed of gold sche lay to reste, 265
 Tyl that the hote sunne gan to weste.

Hyre gilte heris with a goldene thred
 Ibounden were, untrussede as sche lay;
 And nakyd from the brest up to the hed
 Men myghte hyre sen, and sothly for to say 270
 The remenaunt was wel keverede, to my pay,
 Ryght with a subtyl covercheif of valence,
 Ther nas no thikkere cloth of no defense.

The place yaf a thousent savouris sote,
 And Bacus, god of wyn, sat hire besyde; 275
 And Sereis next, that doth of hungir boote;
 And, as I seyde, amyddis lay Cypride,
 To wham on kneis two yonge folk there cryede
 To ben here helpe; but thus I let hem lye,
 And ferthere in the temple I gan espie 280

That in dispit of Dyane the chaste
 Ful manye a bowe ibroke hyng on the wal
 Of maydenys, swiche as gunne here tymys waste
 In hyre servyse; ipeyntede were overal
 Ful manye a story, of whiche I touche shal 285
 A fewe, as of Calyxte, and Athalante,
 And manye a mayde, of whiche the name I wante.

Semyramus, Candace, and Hercules,
 Biblis, Dido, Thisbe, and Pirus,
 Tristram, Isaude, Paris, and Achilles, 290
 Eleyne, Cliopatre, and Troylus,
 Silla, and ek the modyr of Romulus,
 Alle these were peyntid on that othir syde,
 And al here love, and in what plyt they deyde.

Whan I was come agen unto the place 295
 That I of spak, that was so sote and grene,
 Forth welk I tho, myselvyn to solace.
 Tho was I war, wher that ther sat a queene
 That as of lyght the someris sunne shene
 Passith the sterre, right so overmesure 300
 She fayrere was than ony creature.

And in a launde, upon an hil of flouris,
 Was set this noble goddesse Nature.
 Of braunchis were here hallis and here bouris
 Iwrought after here cast and here mesure; 305
 Ne there nas foul that comyth of engendrure
 That they ne were al prest in here presence
 To take hire dom, and yeve hire audyence.

For this was on seynt Valentynys day,
 Whan every bryd comyth there to chese his make, 310
 Of every kynde that men thynke may,

And that so huge a noyse gan they make
 That erthe and eyr and tre and every lake
 So ful was, that onethe was there space
 For me to stonde, so ful was al the place. 315

And right as Aleyn in the Pleynt of Kynde
 Devyseth Natur in aray and face,
 In swich aray men myghte hire there fynde.
 This nobil emperesse, ful of grace,
 Bad every foul to take his owene place 320
 As they were wonyd alwey fro yer to yeere,
 Seynt Valentynys day to stondyn theere.

That is to seyn, the foulis of ravyne
 Were heyest set, and thanne foulis smale
 That etyn as hem Natur wolde enclyne, 325
 As werm or thyng of which I telle no tale;
 And watyr foul sat loueste in the dale;
 But foul that lyvyth be sed sat on the grene,
 And that so fele, that wondyr was to sene.

There myghte men the ryal egle fynde, 330
 That with his sharpe lok persith the sunne,
 And othere eglis of a lowere kynde,
 Of whiche that clerkis wel devyse cunne;
 Ther was the tiraunt with his federys dunne
 And grey, I mene the goshawk, that doth pyne 335
 To bryddis for his outrageous ravyne.

The gentyl facoun, that with his feet distraynyth
 The kyngis hand; the hardy sperhawk eke,
 The quaylis foo; the merlioun that paynyth
 Hymself ful ofte the larke for to seke; 340
 There was the douve, with hire eyen meke;
 The jelous swan, ayens hire deth that syngith;
 The oule ek, that of deth the bode bryngyth.

322 Volantynys. 316 righ. 320 of which om.; no my. 335 And A.

339 merilioun.

The crane geaunt, with his trompis soun;
 The thef the choghe, and ek the jangelynge pye; 345
 The skornynge jay; the elis fo, heroun;
 The false lapwyng, ful of trecherye;
 The starlyng, that the conseyl can bewreye;
 The tame rodok, and the coward kyte;
 The kok, that orloge is of thorpis lyte. 350

The sparwe, Venus sone; the nyghtyngale,
 That clepith forth the grene levys newe;
 The swalwe, morthere of the flyes smale
 That makyn hony of flouris frosche and newe;
 The wedded turtill, with hire herte trewe; 355
 The pokok, with his aungelis clothis bryghte;
 The fesaunt, skornere of the cok be nyghte.

The wakyng goos, the cokkow most onkynde;
 The popynjay, ful of delicasye;
 The drake, stroyere of his owene kynde; 360
 The stork, the wrekere of avouterye;
 The hote cormeraunt of glotenye;
 The raven wys; the crowe, with vois of care;
 The thurstil old, the frosty feldefare.

What shulde I seyn? Of foulis every kynde 365
 That in this world hath federis and stature
 Men myghtyn in that place assemblede fynde
 Byfore the noble goddesse, Nature.
 And everiche of hem dede his besy cure
 Benygnely to chese or for to take, 370
 By hire acord, his formel or his make.

But to the poynt: Nature held on hire hond
 A formele egle, of shap the gentilleste
 That evere she among hire werkis fond,
 The moste benygne, and the goodlieste. 375

In hire was everi vertu at his reste
 So fer-forth, that Nature hireself hadde blysse
 To loke on hire, and ofte hire bek to kysse.

Nature, vicarye o the almyghty lord
 That hot, cold, hevy, lyght, moyst, and dreye 380
 Hath knyt with evene noumberis of acord,
 In esy voys gan for to speke and seye,
 "Foulis, tak hed of my centence, I preye;
 And for youre ese in fortheryng of youre nede,
 As faste as I may speke, I wele yow speede. 385

Ye knowe wel, how Seynt Valentynys day
 By my statute and thorw my governaunce,
 Ye come for to cheese, and fle youre wey,
 Youre makis, as I prike yow with plesaunce;
 But natheles, my ryghtful ordenaunce 390
 May I nat breke, for al this world to wynne,
 That he that most is worthi shal begynne.

The terslet egle, as that ye knowe ful wel,
 The foul ryal above every degre,
 The wyse and worthi, secre, trewe as stel, 395
 Whiche I have formyd, as ye may wel se,
 In every part as it best likyth me,
 It nedith not, his shap yow to devyse,
 He shal ferst chese, and spekyn in his gyse.

And aftyr hym, by ordere shul ye chese 400
 Aftyr youre kynde, everiche as ye lykyth,
 And as youre hap is, shul ye wynne or lese.
 But which of yow that love most entrikyth,
 God synde hym hire that soryest for hym sykyth."
 And therwithal the tersel gan she calle, 405
 And seyde, "My sone, the choys is to yow falle.

But natheles, in this condicioun
 Mot be the choys of everich that is heere;
 That she agre to his eleccioun,
 What so he be, that shulde be hire feere. 410
 This is oure usage alwey, fro yer to yeere;
 And ho so may at this tyme have his grace,
 In blisful tyme he cam into this place!"

With hed enclyned, and with humble cheere,
 This ryal tersel spak, and tariede noht; 415
 "Unto my sovereyn lady, and not my fere,
 I chese, and ches with wil and herte and thought
 The formel on youre hond, so wel iwrought;
 Whos I am al, and evere wele hire serve,
 Do what hire lest, to do me leve or sterve; 420

Besekynge hire of merci and of grace,
 As she that is my lady sovereyne,
 Or let me deye present in this place;
 For certis, longe I may nat lyve in payne,
 For in myn herte is korvyn every veyne, 425
 And havynge only reward to my trouthe,
 My dere herte, have of my wo sum routhe.

And if that I to hyre be founde untrewre,
 Dishobeysaunt or wilful necligent,
 Avauntour, or in proces love a newe, 430
 I preye to yow this be my jugement,
 That with these foulis be I al torent,
 That ilke day that evere she me fynde
 To hire untrewre or in my gilt unkynde.

And syn that hire lovyth non so wel as I, 435
 Al be it that she me nevere of love beheete,
 Thanne ouhte she be myn, thourgh hire mercy,

For othir bond can I non on hire knette,
 Ne nevere for no wo ne shal I lette
 To servyn hire, how fer so that she wende. 440
 Say what yow leste, my tale is at an ende."

Ryght as the fresche rede rose newe
 Ayen the somyr sunne coloured is,
 Ryght so for shame al wexen gan hire hewe
 Of this formel, whan she herde al this; 445
 She neythir answerde wel, ne seyde amys,
 So sore abashat was she, tyl that Nature
 Seyde, "Doughter, drede the nought, I yow assure."

Anothir tersel egle spak anon
 Of lower kynde, seyde, "That shal nat be; 450
 I love hire bet than ye don, be Seynt Jon,
 Or at the leste I love as wel as ye,
 And longere have servyd hire in my degre;
 And if she shulde a lovid for long lovyng,
 To me fullonge hadde be the gerdonyng. 455

I dar ek seyn, if she me fynde fals,
 Unkynde, or jangelere, or rebel ony wyse,
 Or gelous, do me hangyn by the hals;
 And but I bere me in hire servyse
 As wel as that my wit can me suffyse 460
 From poynt to poynt, hyre honour for to save,
 Tak ye my lif, and al the good I have."

The thredde tercel egle answerde tho,
 "Now, serys, ye seen the lytil leyser heere,
 For every foul cryeth out to ben ago 465
 Forth with his mak, or with his lady deere;
 And ek Nature hireself ne wele not heere
 For taryng here not half that I wolde seye;
 And but I speke, I mot for sorwe deye.

Of long servyse avante I me nothing, 470
 But as possible is me to deye today
 For wo, as he that hath ben languyssynge
 This twenty yeer, and as wel happyn may,
 A man may servyn bet and more to pay
 In half a yer althau it were no moore, 475
 Than sum man doth, that servyd hath ful yooore.

I sey not this by me, for I ne can
 Don no servyse that may my lady plese;
 But I dar seyn, I am hire treweste man,
 As to my dom, and fayneste wolde hire ese; 480
 At shorte wordis, til that deth me sese
 I wele ben heris, where I wake or wynke,
 And trewe in al that herte may bethynke."

Of al myn lyf, syn that day I was born,
 So gentil ple in love or othir thyng 485
 Ne herde nevere no man me beforne,
 Ho that hadde leyser and cunnyng
 For to reherse hyre cher and hire spekyng;
 And from the morwe gan this speche laste
 Tyl downward drow the sunne wondir faste. 490

The noyse of foulis for to ben delyvered
 So loude ronge, "Have don, and lat us wende,"
 That wel wende I, the wode hadde al toslyvered.
 "Cum of," they criedyn, "Allas, ye wele us shende;
 Whan shal youre cursede pletynge havyn an ende? 495
 How shulde a juge eythir partie leve
 For ye or nay, withoutyn othir preve?"

The goos, the cokkow, and the doke also
 So cryede, "kek kek," "kokkow," "quek quek," hye,
 That thourw myne erys the noyse wente tho. 500
 The goos seyde, "Al this nys not worth a flye;

But I can shappe herof a remedie,
 And I wele seye myn verdict fayre and swythe,
 For watyr foul, ho so be wroth or blythe."

"And I for werm foul," quod the fol kokkowe, 505
 "And I wele of myn owene autorite,
 For comun profit tak the charge nowe,
 For to delyvere us is gret charite."
 "Ye may onbyde a while yit, perde,"
 Quod the turtill, "if it be youre wille. 510
 A wiht may speke, hym were as fayr ben style.

I am a sed foul, on the onworthieste,
 That wot I wel, and litil of cunnyng;
 But bet is, that a wyhtis tunge reste
 Than entirmetyn hym of suche doinge 515
 Of which he neythir rede can, ne fynde;
 And who so doth ful foule, hymself acloyith,
 For offys uncommyttid ofte anoyeth."

Nature, which that alwey hadde an ere
 To murmur of the lewedenesse behynde, 520
 With facound voys seyde, "Hold youre tungis, there,
 And I shal sone, I hope, a conseyl fynde
 Yow to delyvere and from this noyse unbynde.
 I juge of every folk men shul on calle,
 To seyn the verdict for yow foullys alle." 525

Assentid was to this conclusioun
 The briddis alle, and foulis of ravyne
 Han chosyn fyrst, by playn eleccioun,
 The terselet of the facoun to diffyne
 Al here centence, as hem leste to termyne, 530
 And to Nature hym gunne to presente;
 And she acceptyth hym with glad entente.

507 *the charge nowe* on no charghowe. 511 *wiht* whit. 515 *suhe*. 518 *un-*
commyttid onquit. 520 *behynde om*. 524 *of on*. 527 *lauyne*.

The terselet seyde than in this manere:

"Ful hard were it to prove by resoun

Who lovyth best this gentil formele heere, 535

For everych hath swich replicacioun

That non by skillis may been brought adoun.

I can not se that argumentis awayle;

Thanne semyth it there muste be batayle."

"Al redy!" quod this eglis terslet tho. 540

"Nay, seris," quod he, "if that I durste it seye,

Ye don me wrong, myn tale is not ido,

For, seris, ne takith not a-gref, I preye,

It may not gon as ye wolde in this weye;

Oure is the voys that han the charg on honde, 545

And to the jugis dom ye motyn stonde.

And therefore pes; I seye, as to myn wit

Me wolde thynke how that the worthiest

Of knyghthod and lengest hath used it,

Most of estat, of blod the gentilleste, 550

Were sittynge for hire, if that her leste;

And of these thre she wot hireself, I trowe,

Whiche that he be, for it is light to knowe."

The watyr foulis han here hedis leid

Togedere, and of a short avysement 555

Whan everryche hadde his large gole seyde,

They seydyn, sothly, al be on assent,

How that the goos with hire facounde so gent,

"That so desyrith to pronounce oure nede,

Shal telle oure tale," and preyede God hym spede. 560

As for these watyr foulis tho began

The goos to speke, and in his kakelynge

He seyde, "Pes, now tak kep, every man,

And herkenyth which a resoun I shal brynge.

Myn wit is sharp, I love no taryinge; 565
I seye, I rede hym, thow he were myn brothir,
But she wele love hym, let hym take anothir."

"Lo, here a perfit resoun of a goos!"
Quod the sperhawk, "nevere mot he the!
Lo, sich it is to have a tunge loos. 570
Now, perde, fol, now were it bet for the
Han holde thyn pes, than shewe thyn nysete!
It lyth nat in his myght, ne in his wille,
But soth is seyde, a fol can not ben stille."

The laughtere aros of gentil foulis alle, 575
And right anon the sed foul chosyn hade
The turtel trewe, and gunne hire to hem calle,
And preyede hire for to seyn the sothe sadde
Of this matere, and axsede what she radde.
And she answerde, that, pleyndly, hire entente 580
She wolde it shewe, and sothly what she mente.

"Nay, God forbede a love-re shulde chaunge,"
The turtel seyde, and wex for shame red,
"Thow that his lady evere more be straunge,
Yit lat hym serve hire, til that he be ded. 585
Forsothe I preyse nat the gosis red;
For thow sche deyede, I wolde non othir make,
I wele ben hire til that the deth me take."

"Wel bordit!" quod the doke, "by myn hat!
That men shul lovyn alwey causeles, 590
Who can a resoun fynde, or wit, in that?
Daunsith he murye that is myrtheles?
What shulde I rekke of hym that is recheles?
Kek kek," yit seith the doke, ful wel and fayre,
"There been mo sterris, God wot, than a payre!" 595

"Now, fy, cherl," quod the gentil terselet,
 "Out of the donghil cam that word ful right;
 Thow canst nat seen what thyng is wel beset;
 Thow farst by love as oulys don by lyght,
 The day hem blent, but wel they sen be nyght. 600
 Thy kynde is of so low a wrechednesse
 That what love is, thow canst nat seen ne gesse."

Tho gan the kokkow putte hym forth in pres
 For foul that etith werm, and seyde blyve,
 "So I," quod he, "may have my make in pes, 605
 I reche nat how longe that ye stryve,
 Lat eche of hem ben soleyn al here lyve,
 This is myn red, syn they may nat acorde,
 This shorte lessoun nedith nat recorde."

"Ye, have the glotoun fild inow his paunche, 610
 Thanne are we wel," seyde thanne a merlioun,
 "Thow morthere of the heysoge on the braunche
 That broughte the forth, thow reutheles glotoun,
 Leve thow soleyn, wermes corrupcioun,
 For no fors is of lak of thy nature; 615
 Go, lewed be thow, whil that the world may dure!"

"Now pes," quod Nature, "I comaunde here,
 For I have herd al youre opynyoun,
 And in effect yit be we not the nere;
 But fynally, this is my conclusioun, 620
 That she hireself shal han the eleccioun
 Of whom hire lest, and who be wroth and blythe,
 Hym that she chesith, he shal hire han as swithe.

For syn it may not here discussid be
 Who lovyth hire best, as seyth the terselet, 625
 Thanne wele I don hire this favour, that she

Shal han hym on hom hire herte is set,
 And he hire, that his herte hath on hire knet,
 Thus juge I Nature, for I may not lye
 To non estat, I have non othir eye. 630

But as for conseyl for to chese a make,
 If, I were Resoun, certis, thanne wolde I
 Conseyle yow the ryal tersel take,
 As seyde the terselet, ful skylfully,
 As for the gentilleste and most worthi, 635
 Which I have wrought so wel to my plesaunce,
 That to yow oughte to been a suffisaunce."

With dredful vois the formel tho answerde,
 "My rightful lady, goddesse of Nature,
 Soth is that I am evere undyr youre yerde, 640
 As is anothir lyvis creature,
 And mot ben youre, whil that my lyf may dure;
 And therefore grauntyth me my ferste bone,
 And myn entent that wele I seyn wol sone."

"I graunte it yow," quod she, and than a-non 645
 This formel egle spak in this degre:
 "Almyghty queen, unto this yer be gon,
 I axe respit for to avise me,
 And aftyr that to have my choys al fre;
 This al and sum that I wele speke and seye, 650
 Ye gete no more al thow ye do me deye.

I wele nat serve Venus ne Cupide
 Forsothe as yit, be no manere weye."
 "Now syn it may non othirwise betyde,"
 Quod tho Nature, "heere is no more to seye, 655
 Thanne wolde I that these foulis were aweye,
 Eche with his make, for tarynge lengere heere,"—
 And seyde hem thus, as ye shul aftyr here.

"To yow speke I, ye tersletis," quod Nature,
 "Beth of good herte and servyth, alle thre; 660
 A yer ne is nat so longe to endure,
 And eche of yow peignyng in his degre
 For to do wel; for God wot quit is she
 For yow this yer, what aftyr so befallē,
 This entyrmes is dressid for yow alle." 665

And whan this werk al brought was to an ende,
 To every foul Nature yaf his make
 By evene acord, and on here weye they wende.
 But lord, the blisse and joye that they make,
 For ech gan othir in his wyngis take, 670
 And with here nekkis eche gan othyr wynde,
 Thankynge alwey the noble queen of kynde.

But fyrst were chosyn foulis for to synge,
 As yer be yer was alwey the usance
 To synge a roundele at here departynge, 675
 To don to Nature honour and plesaunce;
 The note, I trow, imakid were in Fraunce.
 The wordis were sweche as ye may fynde
 The nexte vers, as I now have in mynde.

Nowe welcome somer, with thy sonne softe, 680
 That hast thes wintres wedres ovire-shake,
 And drevyne away the longe nyghtes blake.

Saynt Valentyne that ert ful hye olofte,
 Thus syngen smale foules for thy sake
Nowe welcome somer, with thy sonne softe, 685
That hast thes wintres wedres ovire-shake.

Wele han they cause forto gladen ofte
 Sethe ech of hem recoverede hathe hys make,
 Ful blisseful mowe they ben when they wake.

Nowe welcome somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast thes wintres wedres ovire-shake,
And drevyne away the longe nyghtes blake. 690

And with the shoutyng, whan the song was do,
That foullys madyn at here flyght away
I wok, and othere bokys tok me to 695
To rede upon; and yit I rede alwey
In hope, I wis, to rede so sum day
That I shal mete sum thyng for to fare
The bet, and thus to rede I nele nat spare.

Explicit parliamentum Avium In die sancti Valentini ten-
tum secundum Galfridum Chaucer. Deo gracias.

694 the foullys.

THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN

The Prologue.

[A VERSION, LATER.]

A thousent sythis have I herd men telle
That there is joye in hevене, and peyne in helle,
And I acorde wel that it be so;
But natheles, this wit I wel also,
That there ne is non that dwellyth in this cuntre 5
That eythir hath in helle or hevене ibe,
Ne may of it non othere weyis wytyn,
But as he hath herd seyde, or founde it wrytyn,
For by asay there may no man it preve.
But Goddis forbode, but men schulde leve 10
Wel more thyng than men han seyn with eye!
Men schal nat wenyn every thyng a lye
For that he say it nat of yore ago;
God wot, a thyng is nevere the lesse so,
Thow every wyght ne may it nat ise; 15
Bernard the monk ne say nat al, parde!
Thanne motyn we to bokys that we fynde,
Thourw whiche that olde thyngis ben in mynde,
And to the doctryne of these olde wyse
Yevyn credence, in every skylful wyse, 20
And trowyn on these olde aprovede storyis
Of holynesse, of regnys, of victoryis,
Of love, of hate, of othere sundery thyngis,
Of whiche I may nat make rehersyngys.
And if that olde bokis weryn aweye, 25
Iloryn were of remembrance the keye.
Wel oughte us thanne on olde bokys leve,
Thereas there is non othyr asay be preve.
And as for me, thow that myn wit be lite,
On bokys for to rede I me delyte, 30
And in myn herte have hem in reverence,
And to hem yeve swich lust and swich credence
That there is wel onethe game non
That from my bokys make me to gon,

THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN

The prologe of .ix. goode Wymmen.

[B VERSION, EARLIER.]

A thousande tymes I have herd men telle
That ther ys joy in hevene, and peyne in helle,
And I acorde wel that it ys so;
But netheles, yet wot I wel also,
That ther is noon duellyng in this contree 5
That eythir hath in hevene or helle y-be,
Ne may of hit noon other weyes witen,
But as he hath herd seyde or founde it writen,
For by assay ther may no man it preve.
But God forbede, but men shulde leve 10
Wel more thing then men han seen with eye!
Men shal not wenen every thing a lye
But yf himselfe yt seeth, or elles dooth;
For God wot, thing is never the lasse sooth,
Thogh every wight ne may it nat ysee; 15
Bernarde the monke ne saugh nat all, pardee!
Than mote we to bokes that we fynde,
Thurgh which that olde thinges ben in mynde,
And to the doctrine of these olde wyse
Yeve credence, in every skylful wise, 20
That tellen of these olde apprevd stories,
Of holynesse, of regnes, of victories,
Of love, of hate, of other sondry thynges,
Of whiche I may not maken rehersynges.
And yf that olde bokes were away, 25
Yloren were of remembraunce the key.
Wel ought us thanne honouren and beleve
These bokes, there we han noon other preve.
And as for me, though that I konne but lyte,
On bokes for to rede I me delyte, 30
And to hem yive I feyth and ful credence,
And in myn herte have hem in reverence
So hertely, that ther is game noon
That fro my bokes maketh me to goon,

But it be oþer upon the halyday, 35
 Or ellis in the joly tyme of May;
 Whan that I here the smale foulis synge,
 And that the flouris gynne for to sprynge,
 Farwel, my stodye, as lastynge that sesoun!
 Now have I therto this condycyoun 40
 That of alle the flouris in the mede
 Thanne love I most these flouris white and rede
 Swyche as men calle dayesyis in oure toun;
 To hem have I so gret affeccioun,
 As I seyde erst, whan comyn is the May 45
 That in my bed there dawith me no day
 That I ne am up, and walkynge in the mede
 To sen these flouris agen the sunne to sprede
 Whan it upryseth be the morwe schene,
 The longe day thus walkynge in the grene. 50

And whan the sunne gynnys for to weste
 Thanne closeth it, and drawith it to reste,
 So sore it is aferid of the nyght,
 Til on the morwe, that it is dayis lyght;
 This dayeseye, of alle flouris flour, 55
 Fulfylde of vertu and of alle honour,
 And evere ilike fayr and fresch of hewe,
 As wel in wyntyr as in somyr newe
 Fayn wolde I preysyn if I coude, aryght;
 But wo is me, it lyth nat in my myght! 60

For wel I wot, that folk han here beforne
 Of makynge ropyn, and lad away the corn.

But yt be seldom on the holyday; 35
 Save certeynly, whan that the monethe of May
 Is comen, and that I here the foules synge,
 And that the floures gynnyn for to sprynge,
 Fairewel my boke and my devocioun.
 Now have I thanne suche a condicioun, 40
 That of al the floures in the mede
 Thanne love I most thise floures white and rede,
 Suche as men callen daysyes in her tounne.
 To hem have I so grete affeccoun,
 As I seyde erst, whanne comen is the May, 45
 That in my bed ther daweth me no day
 That I nam uppe and walkyng in the mede,
 To seen this floure ayein the sonne sprede,
 Whan it uprysith erly by the morwe.
 That blisful sighte softneth al my sorwe; 50
 So glad am I, whan that I have presence
 Of it, to doon it alle reverence,
 As she that is of alle floures flour,
 Fulfilled of al vertue and honour,
 And evere-ilyke faire and fressh of hewe, 55
 And I love it, and ever ylike newe,
 And evere shal til that myn herte dye;
 Al swere I nat, of this I wol nat lye,
 Ther loved no wight hotter in his lyve.
 And whan that hit ys eve, I renne blyve, 60
 As sone as evere the sonne gynneth weste,
 To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,
 For fere of nyght, so hateth she derknesse!

Hire chere is pleynty sprad in the brightnesse
 Of the sonne, for ther yt wol uncloze. 65
 Allas, that I ne had Englyssh, ryme or prose,
 Suffisant this flour to preyse aryght!
 But helpeth, ye that han konnyng and myght,
 Ye lovers, that kan make of sentiment;
 In this case oghte ye be diligent 70
 To forthren me somewhat in my labour,
 Whethir ye ben with the leef or with the flour.
 For wel I wot that ye han herbiforne
 Of makynge ropen, and lad away the corne;

I come aftyr, glenyng here and ther,
 And am ful glad if I may fynde an er
 Of ony goodly word that they han laft. 65
 And if it happe me rehersen eft
 That they han in here fresche songis said,
 I hope that they wele nat ben evele apayed;
 Sithe it is seyde in fortheryng and honour
 Of hem that eythir servyn lef or flour. 70
 For trustyth wel, I ne have nat undyrtake
 As of the lef agayn the flour to make,
 Ne of the flour to make ageyn the lef,
 No more than of the corn agen the shef;
 For as to me is lefere non ne lothere, 75
 I am witholde yit with never nothire;
 I not ho servyth lef ne who the flour,
 That nys nothyng the entent of my labour.
 For this werk is al of another tunne
 Of olde story er swich strif was begunne. 80

But wherfore that I spak to yeve credence
 To bokys olde, and don hem reverence,
 Is for men schulde autoriteis beleve
 There as there lyth non othyr asay be preve;
 For myn entent is, or I fro yow fare, 85
 The nakede tixt in Englis to declare
 Of manye a story, or ellis of manye a geste,
 As autourys seyn, levyth hem if yow leste.

Whan passed was almost the monyth of May,
 And I hadde romed al the somerys day 90
 The grene medewe, of which that I yow tolde,
 Upon the fresche dayseie to beholde,
 And that the sonne out of the south gan weste,
 And clothede was the flour, and gon to reste
 For derknesse of the nyht of which sche dradde, 95
 Hom to myn hous ful swiftly I me spadde,
 And in a lytyl erber that I have

And I come after, glenyng here and there, 75
 And am ful glad yf I may fynde an ere
 Of any goodly word that ye han left.
 And thogh it happen me rehercen eft
 That ye han in your fresshe songes sayede,
 Forbereth me, and beth nat evele apayede, 80
 Syn that ye see I do yt in the honour
 Of love, and eke in service of the flour
 Whom that I serve, as I have witte or myght.
 She is the clerenesse and the verray lyght,
 That in this derke worlde me wynt and ledyth. 85
 The hert inwith my sorwfull brest yow dredith
 And loveth so sore, that ye ben verrayly
 The maistresse of my witte and no thing I.
 My worde, my werkes, ys knyht so in youre bond,
 That as an harpe obeieth to the hond, 90
 And maketh it soun after his fyngerynge,
 Ryght so mowe ye oute of myn herte bringe
 Swich vois, ryght as yow lyst to laughe or pleyn,
 Be ye my gide and lady sovereyn;
 As to myn erthely god, to yowe I calle, 95
 Bothe in this werke, and in my sorwes alle.
 But wherfore that I spake, to yive credence
 To olde stories, and doon hem reverence
 And that men mosten more thyng beleve
 Then men may seen at eighe, or elles preve? 100
 That shal I seyn, whanne that I see my tyme;
 I may not al attones speke in ryme.
 My besy gost, that thrusteth alwey newe
 To seen this flour so yong, so fressh of hewe,
 Constreyned me with so gledy desire, 105
 That in myn herte I feelee yet the fire
 That made me to ryse, er yt wer day,
 (And this was now the firste morwe of May),
 With dredful hert and glad devocioun
 For to ben at the resureccioun 110
 Of this flour whan yt shulde uncloze
 Agayne the sonne, that roos as rede as rose;
 That in the brest was of the beste that day
 That Agenores doghtre ladde away.

Ibenchede newe with turwis fresche i-grawe,
 I bad men schulde me my couche make;
 For deynte of the newe somerys sake, 100
 I bad hem strowe flouris on my bed.
 Whan I was layd, and hadde myn eyen hid,
 I fel aslepe withinne an our or two.
 Me mette, how I was in the medewe tho
 And that I romede in that same gyse 105
 To sen that flour as ye han herd devyse.
 Fayr was this medewe, as thoughte me, overal,
 With flouris sote enbroudit was it al,
 As for to speke of gomme, or erbe, or tre,
 Comparisoun may non imakede be; 110
 For it surmountede pleynly alle odours
 And eek of ryche beute alle flourys.
 Forgetyn hadde the erthe his pore estat
 Of wyntyr, that hym nakede made and mat,
 And with his swerd of cold so sore hadde grevyd; 115
 Now hadde the tempere sonne al that relevyd,
 And clothede hym in grene al newe ageyn.
 The smale foulis, of the seson fayn,
 That from the panter and the net ben skapid,
 Upon the foulere that hem made awapid 120
 In wyntyr, and distroyed hadde hire brod,
 In his dispit hem thoughte it dede hem good
 To synge of hym, and in here song despise
 The foule cherl, that for his covetyse
 Hadde hem betrayed with his sophistrye. 125
 This was here song, "The foulere we defye!"
 Some songyn layes on the braunchis clere
 Of love and May, that joye it was to here,
 In worschepe and in preysyng of hire make,
 And of the newe blysful somerys sake, 130

That sungyn, "Blyssede be Seynt Volentyn!
 At his day I ches yow to be myn,
 Withoute repentyng, myn herte swete!"
 And therwithal here bekys gunne mete.
 The honour and the humble obeysaunces 135
 They dede, and after othere observauncys

And doune on knes anoon-ryght I me sette, 115
 And, as I koude, this fresshe flour I grette,
 Knelyng alwey til it unclosed was
 Upon the smale, softe, swote gras,
 That was with floures swote enbrouded al
 Of swich suetnesse, and swich odour over-al, 120
 That for to speke of gomme, or herbe, or tree,
 Comparisoun may noon ymaked bee;
 For yt surmounteth pleynty alle odoures,
 And eek of riche beaute alle floures.
 Forgeten had the erthe his pore estate 125
 Of wyntir, that hem naked made and mate,
 And with his swerd of colde so sore greved;
 Now hath thatempres sonne all that releved
 That naked was, and clad yt new agayn.
 The smale foules, of the seson fayn, 130
 That of the panter and the nette ben scaped,
 Upon the foweler that hem made awhaped
 In wynter, and distroyed hadde hire broode,
 In his dispite hem thoghte yt did hem goode
 To synge of hym, and in hir songe dispise 135
 The foule cherle, that for his covetise
 Had hem betrayed with his sophistrye.
 This was hire songe, "The foweler we deffye
 And al his crafte," and somme songen clere
 Layes of love, that joye it was to here, 140
 In worshipynge, and in preysinge of hir make,
 And for the newe blisful somers sake.
 Upon the braunches, ful of blosmes softe,
 In hire delyt they turned hem ful ofte,
 And songen, "Blessed be Seynt Valentyne, 145
 For on his day I chees yow to be myne,
 With-uten repentyng, myn herte swete!"
 And therwithalle hire bekes gonnen meete,
 Yeldyng honour and humble obeysaunces
 To love, and diden hire othere observaunces 150

Ryht plesyng onto Love and to Nature,
So eche of hem doth wel to cryatur.
This song to herken I dede al myn entent,
For why, I mette I wiste what they ment.

140

That longeth onto Love, and to Nature;—
 Construeth that as yow lyst, I do no cure.
 And thoo that hadde doon unkyndenesse,
 As dooth the tydif, for newfangelnesse
 Besoghte mercy of hir trespassynge, 155
 And humbly songen hire repentynge,
 And sworn on the blosmes to be trewe,
 So that hire makes wolde upon hem rewe;
 And at the laste maden hire acord,
 Al founde they Daunger for a tyme a lord; 160
 Yet Pitee, thurgh his stronge gentil myght,
 Forgaf, and maked mercy passen ryght,
 Thurgh innocence and ruled curtesye.
 But I ne clepe nat innocence folye,
 Ne fals pitee, for vertue is the mene, 165
 As Etike seith, in swich maner I mene.
 And thus thise foweles, voide of al malice,
 Acordeden to love, and laften vice
 Of hate, and songen alle of oon acorde,
 "Welcome, somer, oure governour and lorde!" 170
 And Zepherus and Flora gentilly
 Yaf to the floures, softe and tenderly,
 Hire swoote breth, and made hem for to sprede,
 As god and goddesse of the floury mede,
 In whiche me thought I myghte day by day 175
 Duellen alwey, the joly monyth of May,
 Withouten slepe, withouten mete or drynke.
 Adoune ful softely I gan to synke,
 And lenynge on myn elbowe and my syde,
 The longe day I shoope me for tabide, 180
 For nothing ellis, and I shal nat lye,
 But for to loke upon the daysie;
 That men by reson wel it calle may
 The daisie, or elles the ye of day,
 The emperice and floure of floures alle; 185
 I pray to God, that faire mote she falle,
 And alle that loven floures for hire sake!
 But natheles, ne wene nat that I make
 In preysing of the flour agayn the leef,
 No more than of the corne agayn the sheef, 190
 For as to me, nys lever noon ne lother,

Tyl at the laste a larke song above,
 "I se," quod she, "the myghty God of Love;
 Lo yond he comyth, I se hise wyngis sprede!"
 Tho gan I loken endelong the mede,
 And saw hym come and in his hond a quene 145
 Clothid in ryal abyte, al of grene.
 A frette of goold sche hadde, next hyre her,
 And upon that a whit corone sche ber
 With many flourys, and I schal nat lye;
 For al the world, ryght as the dayseye 150
 Icorounede is with white levys lite,
 Swiche were the flourys of hire corone white.
 For of o perle fyn and oryental
 Hyre white coroun was imakyd al;
 For whiche the white coroun above the grene 155
 Made hire lyk a dayseye for to sene,
 Considerede ek the fret of gold above.
 Iclothede was this myhty God of Love
 Of silk, ibroudede ful of grene grevys,
 A garlond on his hed of rose levys 160
 Stekid al with lylle flourys newe.
 But of his face I can not seyn the hewe;
 For sekyrly, his face schon so bryhte
 That with the glem astonede was the syhte,
 A furlongwey I myhte hym not beholde. 165

I nam withholden yit with never nother
 Ne I not who serveth leef ne who the flour;
 Wel browken they her service or labour,
 For this thing is al of another tonne 195
 Of olde storye, er swiche thinge was begonne.
 Whan that the sonne out of the south gan west,
 And that this floure gan close and goon to rest,
 For derknesse of the nyght, the which she dred,
 Home to myn house ful swiftly I me sped, 200
 To goon to reste, and erly for to ryse,
 To seen this flour sprede, as I devyse;
 And in a litel herber that I have,
 That benched was on turves fressh ygrave,
 I bad men sholde me my couche make; 205
 For deyntee of the newe someres sake,
 I bad hem strawen floures on my bed.
 Whan I was leyde, and had myn eyen hed,
 I fel on slepe inwith an houre or twoo.
 Me mette how I lay in the medewe thoo, 210
 And from afer come walkyng in the mede,
 To seen this flour that I love so and drede,
 The God of Love, and in his hande a quene,
 And she was clad in real habite grene.
 A fret of gold she hadde next her heer, 215
 And upon that a white coroune she beer,
 With flourouns smale, and I shal nat lye,
 For al the worlde ryght as a daysye
 Ycorouned ys with white leves lyte,
 So were the flowrouns of hire coroune white; 220
 For of o perle fyne, oriental,
 Hire white coroune was imaked al;
 For which the white coroune above the grene
 Made hire lyke a daysie for to sene,
 Considered eke hir fret of golde above. 225
 Yclothed was this myghty God of Love
 In silke, enbrouded ful of grene greves,
 Inwith a fret of rede rose leves,
 The fresshest syn the worlde was first bygonne;
 His gilte here was corowned with a sonne, 230
 Istede of golde for hevynesse and wyght.
 Therwith me thocht his face shoon so bryght
 That wel unnethes myght I him beholde,

But at the laste in hande I saw hym holde
 Two fery dartis, as the gleedys rede,
 And aungellych hyse wengis gan he sprede.
 And al be that men seyn that blynd is he,
 Algate me thoughte he myghte wel ise, 170
 For sternely on me he gan beholde
 So that his lokynge doth myn herte colde.
 And be the hond he held the noble quene
 Corouned with whit and clothede al in grene,
 So womanly, so benygne, and so meke, 175
 That in this world thow that men wolde seke,
 Half hire beute schulde men nat fynde
 In cryature that formede is be kynde.
 Hire name was Alceste the debonayre,
 I preye to God, that evere falle sche fayre! 180
 For ne hadde confort been of hire presence,
 I hadde be ded, withoutyn ony defence,
 For dred of Lovys wordys and his chere,
 As, whan tyme is, hereafter ye schal here.
 Byhynde this God of Love, upon this grene, 185
 I saw comynge of ladyis nynetene,
 In ryal abyte, a ful esy pas,
 And after hem come of wemen swich a tras
 That syn that God Adam made of erthe,
 The thredde part of wemen, ne the ferthe, 190
 Ne wende I not by possibilite,
 Haddyn evere in this world ibe,
 And trewe of love these wemen were echon.
 Now whether was that a wondyr thyng or non,
 That ryht anon, as that they gunne espye 195
 This flour, whiche that I clepe the dayseye,
 Ful sodeynly they styntyn alle atonys,
 And knelede adoun, as it were for the nonys,
 And after that they wentyn in cumpas
 Daunsynge aboute this flour an esy pas, 200
 And songyn, as it were, in carolewyse,
 This balade, whiche that I schal yow devyse.

And in his hande me thoght I saugh him holde
 Twoo fryr dartes, as the gledes rede, 235
 And aungelyke hys wynges saugh I sprede.
 And al be that men seyn that blynd ys he,
 Algate me thoghte that he myghte se,
 For sternely on me he gan byholde,
 So that his loking dooth myn herte colde. 240
 And by the hande he helde this noble quene,
 Corowned with white and clothed al in grene,
 So womanly, so benigne, and so meke
 That in this world thogh that men wolde seke,
 Half of hire beaute shulde men nat fynde 245
 In creature that formed ys by kynde.

And therfore may I seyn, as thynketh me,
 This songe, in preysyng of this lady fre.

* 238 thoght, myght. 240 hert. 244 wolde seke om. 245 MS. has only
nat fynde.

[*Balade.*]

Hyd Absalon, thy gilte tressis clere;
 Ester, ley thow thy meknesse al adoun;
 Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendely manere; 205
 Penolope, and Marcia Catoun,
 Mak of youre wyfhood no comparisoun;
 Hyde ye youre beuteis, Ysoude and Elene,
 Alceste is here, that al that may destene.

Thy fayre body, lat it nat apeere, 210
 Laveyne, and thow, Lucresse of Rome Toun,
 And Pollexene, that boughte love so dere,
 Ek Cleopatre with al thy passioun,
 Hide ye youre trouth in love and youre renoun;
 And thow, Tysbe, that hast for love swich peyne, 215
 Alceste is here, that al that may desteyne.

Herro, Dido, Laodomya, alle in fere,
 Ek Phillis hangynge for thy Demophoun,
 And Canace, espied be thy chere,
 Ysiphile, bytrayed with Jasoun, 220
 Mak of youre trouthe in love no bost ne soun;
 Nor Ypermystre or Adriane, ne pleyne;
 Alceste is here, that al that may disteyne.

Whan that this balade al isongyn was,

Hyde, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere;
 Ester, ley thou thy mekenesse al adowne; 250
 Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere;
 Penalopee and Marcia Catoun,
 Make of youre wifhode no comparysoun;
 Hyde ye youre beautes, Ysoude and Eleyne;
 My lady comith, that al this may disteyne. 255

Thy faire body, lat yt nat appere,
 Lavyne; and thou, Lucesse of Rome tounne,
 And Polixene, that boghten love so dere;
 And Cleopatre with al thy passyon,
 Hyde ye your trouthe of love and your renoun; 260
 And thou Tesbe, that hast of love suche peyne,
 My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

Herro, Dido, Laudomia, alle y-fere,
 And Phillis hangyng for thy Demophon,
 And Canace espied by thy chere, 265
 Ysiphile, betrayesd with Iason,
 Maketh of your trouthe neythir boost ne sounne;
 Nor Ypermystre or Adriane, ye tweyne,
 My lady cometh, that al this may dysteyne.

This balade may ful wel y-songen be, 270
 As I have seyde erst, by my lady free;
 For certeynly, al thise mowe nat suffise
 To apperen wyth my lady, in no wyse.
 For as the sonne wole the fire disteyne,
 So passeth al my lady sovereyne, 275

That ys so good, so faire, so debonayre;
 I prey to God, that ever falle hire faire!
 For nadde comfort ben of hire presence,
 I hadde ben dede withouten any defence,
 For drede of Loves wordes and his chere; 280
 As when tyme ys, hereafter ye shal here.
 Behynde this God of Love, upon the grene,
 I saugh comyng of ladyes nientene

Upon the softe and sote grene gras 225
 They settyn hem ful softly adoun,
 By ordere alle in cumpas, alle enveroun.
 Fyrst sat the God of Love, and thanne this queene,
 With the white corone clad in grene,
 And sithyn al the remenant by and by, 230
 As they were of degre, ful curteysly;
 Ne nat a word was spokyn in that place
 The mountenaunce of a furlongwey of space.
 I, lenyng faste by undyr a bente,
 Abod to knowe what this peple mente, 235
 As stille as ony ston; til at the laste
 The God of Love on me his eye caste,
 And seyde, "Ho restith there?" and I answerde
 Unto his axsyng, whan that I hym herde,
 And seyde, "Sere, it am I"; and cam hym ner, 240
 And salewede hym. Quod he, "What dost thou her
 In my presence, and that so boldely?
 For it were bettere worthi trewely
 A werm to comen in my syht than thou."
 "And why, sere?" quod I, "and it lyke yow?" 245
 "For thou," quod he, "art therto nothyng able;
 My servauntis ben alle wyse and honourable,
 Thou art my mortal fo, and me warreyest,
 And of myne olde servauntis thou mysseyst,
 And hynderyst hem with thy translacyoun, 250
 And lettist folk to han devocyoun

In real habite, a ful esy paas;
 And after hem coome of wymen swich a traas, 285
 That syn that God Adam hadde made of erthe,
 The thridde part of mankynde, or the ferthe,
 Ne wende I not by possibilittee
 Had ever in this wide worlde ybee.
 And trewe of love thise women were echon. 290
 Now wheither was that a wonder thing or non,
 That ryght anoon as that they gonne espye
 Thys flour, which that I clepe the daysie,
 Ful sodeynly they stynten al attones,
 And knelede doune, as it were for the nones, 295
 And songen with o vois, "Heel and honour
 To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour
 That bereth our alder pris in figurynge;
 Hire white corowne beryth the witnessynge."
 And with that word, acompas enviroun, 300
 They setten hem ful softly adoun.
 First sat the God of Love, and syth his quene
 With the white corowne, clad in grene;
 And sithen al the remenaunt by and by,
 As they were of estaat, ful curteysly; 305
 Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place
 The mountaunce of a furlong wey of space.
 I, knelyng by this floure in good entente,
 Aboode to knowen what this peple mente,
 As stille as any ston; til at the last 310
 This God of Love on me hyse eighen caste,
 And seyde, "Who kneleth there?" and I answerde
 Unto his askynge, whan that I it herde,
 And seyde, "Sir, it am I," and come him nere,
 And salwed him. Quod he, "What dostow here 315
 So ngh myn ounne floure so boldely?
 Yt were better worthy trewely
 A worme to neghen ner my flour than thow."
 "And why, sire?" quod I, "and yt lyke yow?"
 "For thow," quod he, "art therto nothing able. 320
 Yt is my relyke, digne and delytable,
 And thow my foo, and al my folke werreyest,
 And of myn olde servauntes thow mysseyest,
 And hynderest hem with thy translacioun,
 And lettest folke from hire devocioun 325

To servyn me, and haldist it folye
 To troste on me, thow mayst it nat denye,
 For in pleyn tixt, it nedyth nat to glose,
 Thow hast translatid the Romauns of the Rose, 255
 That is an eresye ageyns my lawe,
 And makyst wise folk fro me withdrawe.
 And thynkist in thy wit, that is ful cole,
 That he nys but a verray propre fole
 That lovyyth paramouris to harde and hote. 260
 Wel wot I therby, thow begynnyst dote,
 As olde folis whan here spiryt faylyth.
 Thanne blame they folk, and wete nat what hem ealyth!
 Hast thow nat mad in Englys ek the bok
 How that Crisseyyde Troylis forsok, 265
 In schewynge how that wemen han don mis?
 Bit natheles, answeze me now to this,
 Why noldist thow as wel a seyde goodnes
 Of wemen, as thow hast seyde wekedenes?
 Was there no good matyr in thy mynde, 270
 Ne in alle thy bokys ne coudist thow nat fynde
 Sum story of wemen, that were goode and trewe?
 Yis, God wot sixty bokys olde and newe
 Hast thow thyself, alle ful of storyis grete,
 That bothe Romaynys and ek Grekis trete 275
 Of sundery wemen, whiche lyf that they ladde,
 And evere an hunderede goode ageyn on badde.
 This knowith God, and alle clerkis ek,
 That usyn sweche materis for to sek.
 What seith Valerye, Titus, or Claudyan? 280
 What seith Jerome agayns Jovynyan?
 How clene maydenys and how trewe wyvys,
 How stedefaste wedewys durynge alle here lyvys
 Tellyth Jerome; and that nat of a fewe,
 But I dar seyn an hunderede on a rewe, 285
 That it is pete for to rede, and routhe,
 The wo that they endure for here trouth.
 For to hyre love were they so trewe,
 That rather than they wolde take a newe,
 They chose to be ded in sundery wyse, 290
 And deiedyn, as the story wele devyse.
 And some were brend, and some were cut the hals,
 And some dreynt, for they woldyn not be fals,

To serve me, and holdest it folye
To serve love, thou maist yt nat denye;
For in pleyne text, withouten nede of glose,
Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the Rose,
That is an heresyde ayeins my lawe, 330
And makest wise folke fro me withdrawe.

And of Creseyde thou hast seyde as the lyst,
That maketh men to wommen lasse triste

That ben as trewe as ever was any steel.

For alle kepid they here maydynhed,
 Or ellis wedlok, or here wedewehed; 295
 And this thing was nat kept for holynesse,
 But al for verray vertu and clennesse,
 And for men schulde sette on hem no lak;
 And yit they were hethene, al the pak,
 That were so sore adrad of alle schame. 300
 These olde wemen kepte so here name,
 That in this world, I trowe, men schal nat fynde
 A man that coude be so trewe and kynde,
 As was the leste woman in that tyde.
 What seyth also the Epistelle of Ovyde 305
 Of trewe wyvys and of here labour?
 What Vincent, in his Estoryal Myrour?
 Ek al the world of autourys maystow here,
 Cristene and hethene, trete of swich matere,
 It nedyth nat al day thus for to endite. 310
 But yit I seye, what eylyth the to wryte
 The draf of storyis, and forgete the corn?
 Be Seynt Venus, of whom that I was born,
 Althow thow reneyed hast my lay,
 As othere olde folys, manye a day, 315

Thow schalt repente it, so that it schal be sene!"
 Thanne spak Alceste, the worthyeste queene,
 And seyde, "God, ryght of youre curteysye,
 Ye motyn herkenyn if he can repleye
 Ageyns these poyntys that ye han to hym mevid. 320
 A god ne schulde not thus been agrevyd,
 But of his deite he schal be stable
 And therto ryghtful and ek mercyable.
 He schal nat ryghtfully his yre wreke
 Or he have herd the tothyr partye speke. 325
 Al ne is nat gospel that is to yow pleynynd,
 The God of Love hereth manye a tale ifeynyd;
 For in youre court is manye a losengeour,
 And manye a queynte totulour acusour,
 That tabourryn in youre eres manye a thyng 330
 For hate, or for jelous ymagynyng,
 And for to han with you sum dalyaunce.

Of thyn answere avise the ryght weel; 335
For thogh that thou reneyed hast my lay,
As other wrecches han doon many a day,
By seynte Venus, that my moder ys,
If that thou lyve, thou shalt repenten this
So cruelly, that it shal wele be sene." 340
Thoo spake this lady, clothed al in grene,
And seyde, "God, ryght of youre curtesye,
Ye moten herken yf he can replye
Agayns al this, that ye have to him meved.
A god ne sholde nat be thus agreved, 345
But of hys deitee he shal be stable,
And therto gracious, and merciabile.
And yf ye nere a god, that knowen alle,
Thanne myght yt be, as I yow tellen shalle,
This man to yow may falsly ben accused, 350
That as by right him oughte ben excused.
For in youre courte ys many a losengeour,
And many a queynte totelere accusour,
That tabouren in youre eres many a sown.
Ryght aftir hire ymagynacioun, 355
To have youre daliance, and for envie.

Envye—I preie to god yeve hire myschaunce!—
 Is lavender in the grete court alway,
 For she ne partyth, neythir nyght ne day, 335
 Out of the hous of Cesar, thus seyth Dante;
 Whoso that goth, alwey sche mote not wante.
 This man to yow may wrongly ben acused,
 There as be ryght hym oughte ben excusid;
 Or ellis, sere, for that this man is nyce, 340
 He may translate a thyng in no malyce,
 But for he usyth bokis for to make,
 And takyth non hed of what matere he take;
 Therefore he wrot the Rose and ek Crisseyde
 Of innocence, and nyste what he seyde. 345
 Or hym was bodyn make thilke tweye
 Of sum persone, and durste it not withseye;
 For he hath wrete manye a bok er this.
 He ne hath not don so grevosly amys
 To translate that olde clerkis wryte, 350
 As thow that he of maleys wolde endyte
 Despit of love, and hadde hymself iwrouht.
 This schulde a ryghtwys lord han in his thought,
 And not ben lyk tyrauntis of Lumbardye
 That usyn wilfulhed and tyrannye; 355
 For he that kyng or lord is naturel,
 Hym oughte nat be tyraunt and crewel
 As is a fermour, to don the harm he can;
 He muste thynke, it is his lige man,
 And that hym owith, o verry duetee, 360
 Schewyn his peple pleyn benygnete,
 And wel to heryn here excusacyouns,
 And here compleyntys and petyciouns,
 In duewe tyme whan they schal it profre;
 This is the sentens of the phylisophre: 365
 A kyng to kepe hise lygis in justise,
 Withouten doute, that is his offise,
 And therto is a kyng ful depe isworn
 Ful manye an hunderede wyntyre here beforne,
 And for to kepe his lordys hir degre, 370
 As it is ryght and skylful that they be
 Enhaunsede and honoured, and most dere,
 For they ben half goddys in this world here;

335 *she he; nygh.* 337 *not om.* 359 *must.* 367 *which oughtyn.*
 372 *and om.*

Thise ben the causes, and I shal not lye;
 Envie ys lavendere of the court alway,
 For she ne parteth, neither nyght ne day,
 Out of the house of Cesar, thus seith Dante; 360
 Who so that gooth, algate she wol nat wante.

And eke perauntere for this man ys nyce,
 He myghte doon yt, gessyng no malice;
 But for he useth thynges for to make,
 Hym rekketh noght of what matere he take; 365

Or him was boden maken thilke tweye
 Of somme persone, and durste yt nat with-seye;
 Or him repenteth outrely of this,
 He ne hath nat doon so grevously amys 370
 To translaten that olde clerkes writen,
 As thogh that he of malice wolde enditen
 Despite of love, and had him-selfe yt wroght.
 This shoolde a ryghtwis lord have in his thoght,
 And nat be lyke tirauntez of Lumbardye,
 That han no reward but at tyrannye. 375
 For he that kynge or lord ys naturel,
 Hym oghte nat be tiraunt ne crewel
 As is a fermour, to doon the harme he kan.
 He moste thinke yt is his leege man,

And is his tresour, and his gold in cofre. 380
 This is the sentence of the philosophre:
 A kyng to kepe hise leeges in justice,
 Withouten doute, that is his office;

Al wol he kepe hise lordes hire degree,
 As it ys ryght and skilful that they bee 385
 Enhaunced and honoured, and most dere,
 For they ben half goddys in this world here,

This schal he don, bothe to pore and ryche,
 Al be that her estat be nat alyche, 375
 And han of pore folk compassioun;
 For lo, the gentyl kynde of the lyoun!
 For whan a flye offendyth hym or bytith,
 He with his tayl away the flye smytyth
 Al esyly; for, of his genterye, 380
 Hym deynyth nat to wreke hym on a flye,
 As doth a curre, or ellis anothir beste.
 In noble corage oughte ben areste,
 And weyen every thyng by equite,
 And evere han reward to his owen degre. 385
 For, sire, it is no maystrye for a lord
 To dampne a man withoute answer or word;
 And for a lord that is wol foul to use.
 And if so be, he may hym nat ascuse,
 But axith mercy with a sorweful herte, 390
 And proferyth hym ryght in his bare scherte
 To been ryght at youre owene jugement,
 Than ought a God, by schort avisement,
 Considere his owene honour and his trespace.
 For sythe no cause of deth lyth in this cace, 395
 Yow oughte to ben the lyghtere merciablen.
 Letith youre yre and beth sumwhat trefable;
 The man hath servyd yow of his konnyng,
 And fortheryd youre lawe with his makyng.
 Whil he was yong he kepte youre estat; 400
 I not where he be now a renagat,
 But wel I wot, with that he can endyte,
 He hath makid lewede folk to delyte
 To servyn yow in preysynge of youre name.
 He made the bok that highte the Hous of Fame, 405
 And ek the Deth of Blaunche the duchesse,
 And the Parlement of Foullis, as I gesse,
 And al the love of Palamon and Arcite
 Of Thebes, thow the storye is knowe lite;
 And manye an ympne for your halydayis, 410
 That lightyn baladis, roundelys, vyrelayes;
 And for to speke of othyr besynesse,
 He hath in prose translatid Boece,
 And of the Wrechede Engendrynge of Mankynde,

Yit mote he doon bothe ryght to poore and ryche,
 Al be that hire estaat be nat yliche,
 And han of poore folke compassyoun. 390
 For, loo, the gentil kynde of the lyon!
 For whan a flye offendith him or biteth,
 He with his tayle away the flye smyteth
 Al esely, for of hys gentrye
 Hym deyneth not to wreke hym on a flye, 395
 As dooth a curre, or elles another best.
 In noble corage oughte ben arest,
 And weyen every thing by equitye,
 And ever have rewarde to his owen degree.
 For, syr, yt is no maistrye for a lorde 400
 To dampne a man without answeere of worde,
 And for a lorde that is ful foule to use.
 And it so be he may hym nat excuse,
 But asketh mercy with a dredeful herte,
 And profereth him ryght in his bare sherte 405
 To ben ryght at your owen jugement,
 Than oght a God, by short avysement,
 Consydre his owne honour and hys trespas.
 For syth no cause of dethe lyeth in this caas,
 Yow oghte to ben the lyghter merciabie; 410
 Leteth youre ire, and beth sumwhat trefable!
 The man hath served yow of his kunnyng,
 And furthred wel youre lawe in his makyng.

Al be hit that he kan nat wel endite,
 Yet hath he made lewde folke delyte 415
 To serve yow, in preysinge of your name.
 He made the book that hight the Hous of Fame,
 And eke the deeth of Blaunche the Duchesse,
 And the Parlement of Foules, as I gesse,
 And al the love of Palamon and Arcite 420
 Of Thebes, thogh the storye ys knowen lyte;
 And many an ympne for your halydayes,
 That highten balades, roundels, virelayes.
 And for to speke of other holynesse,
 He hath in proce translated Boece, 425

As man may in Pope Innocent ifynde; 415
 And made the Lyf also of Seynt Cecile.
 He made also, gon sithen a gret while,
 Orygenes upon the Maudeleyne;
 Hym oughte now to have the lesse peyne.
 He hath mad manye a lay and manye a thyng; 420
 Now as ye ben a god and ek a kyng,
 I, youre Alceste, whilom Quene of Trace,
 I axe yow this man ryght of youre grace,
 That ye hym nevere hurte in al his lyve;
 And she schal swere to yow, and that as blyve, 425
 He schal no more agiltyn in this wyse;
 But he schal makyn, as ye wele devyse,
 Of wemen, trewe in lovyng al here lyve,
 Wher-so ye wele, of maydyn or of wyve;
 And fortheryn yow, as meche as he mysseyde 430
 Or in the Rose or ellis in Crisseyde."
 The God of Love answerede hire thus anon:
 "Madame," quod he, "it is so longe agon
 That I yow knew so charytable and trewe,
 That nevere yit, sithe that the world was newe, 435
 To me ne fond I never non bet than the;
 That if that I wele save my degre,
 I may ne wel not warne youre requeste.
 Al lyth in yow, doth with hym what yow leste,
 And al foryeve, withoute lengere space, 440
 For who so yevyth a yifte, or doth a grace,
 Do it be-tyme, his thank is wel the more.
 And demyth ye what he shal don therfore.
 Go, thanke now my lady here," quod he.
 I ros, and doun I sette me on my kne, 445
 And seyde thus: "Madame, the God above
 Foryelde yow that ye the God of Love
 Han makyd me his wrethe to foryeve;
 And yeve me grace so longe for to leve
 That I may knowe sothly what ye be, 450
 That han me holpyn and put in swich degre.
 But trewely I wende, as in this cas,
 Naught have agilt, ne don to Love trespas.
 For why, a trewe man withoute drede,
 Hath nat to parte with a thevys dede, 455

And maade the Lyfe also of Seynt Cecile.
 He made also, goon sithen a grete while,
 Origenes upon the Maudeleyne;
 Hym oughte now to have the lesse peyne.
 He hath maade many a lay and many a thinge. 430
 Now as ye be a God and eke a kynge,
 I, your Alceste, whilom quene of Trace,
 Y aske yow this man ryght of your grace,
 That ye him never hurte in al his lyve.
 And he shal sweren to yow, and that as blyve, 435
 He shal never more agilten in this wyse;
 But he shal maken, as ye wol devyse,
 Of wommèn trewe in lovyng al hire lyfe,
 Wherso ye wol, of mayden or of wyfe,
 And forthren yow as muche as he mysseyde 440
 Or in the Rose, or elles in Creseyde.”
 The God of Love answerede hire anoon,
 “Madame,” quod he, “it is so long agoon
 That I yow knewe so charitable and trewe,
 That never yit, syn that the worlde was newe, 445
 To me ne founde y better noon than yee.
 If that I wolde save my degree,
 I may ne wol nat werne your requeste,
 Al lyeth in yow, dooth wyth hym as yow liste;
 I al foryeve, withouten lenger space; 450
 For who so yeveth a yifte or dooth a grace,
 Do it by-tyme, his thank ys wel the more.
 And demeth ye, what he shal doo therfore.
 Goo thanke now my lady here,” quod he.
 I roos, and doune I sette me on my knee, 455
 And seyde thus, “Madame, the God above
 Foryelde yow, that ye the god of love
 Han maked me his wrathe to foryive,
 And gyve me grace so long for to lyve,
 That I may knowe soothly what ye bee, 460
 That han me holpe and put in this degree.
 But trewely I wende, as in this cas,
 Naught have agilt, ne doon to Love trespas.
 For why, a trewe man, withouten drede,
 Hath nat to parten with a theves dede; 465

427 sithen ys. 435 as om. 437 he om. 447 I ye. 457 ye om. 459 gyve me om.
 461 me in. 462 trewly.

Ne a trewe loveure oughte me nat blame,
 Thow that I speke a fals loveure sum schame;
 They aughte rathere with me for to holde,
 For that I of Criseyde wrot or tolde,
 Or of the Rose, what so myn auctour mente, 460
 Algate, God wot, it was myn entente
 To forthere trouthe in love and it cheryse,
 And to be war from falsenesse and from vice
 By swich ensauple, this was my menynges.
 And sche answerde, "Lat be thyn arguynge, 465
 For Love ne wele nat countyrpletyd be
 In ryght ne wrong; and lerne this at me,
 Thow hast thy grace, and holde the ryght therto.
 Now wole I seyn, what penaunce thow schalt do
 For thy trespace, and undyrstonde it here; 470
 Thow schalt, whil that thow levyst yer be yere
 The moste partye of thy lyve spende
 In makynge of a glorious legende
 Of goode wemen, maydenys and wyves,
 That were trewe in lovynges al here lyvys; 475
 And telle of false men that hem betrayen
 That al here lyf ne don nat but asayen
 How manye wemen they may don a schame.
 For in youre world that is now holdyn game!
 And thow the lestyth nat a loveure be, 480
 Spek wel of love, this penaunce yeve I the;
 And to the God of Love I schal so preye
 That he schal charge hise servauntys, by ony weye,
 To fortheryn the, and wel thy labour quite.
 Go now thy wey, thy penaunce is but lyte." 485

The God of Love gan smyle, and thanne he seyde,
 "Wostow," quod he, "wher this be wif or mayde
 Or queen or countesse, or of what degre
 That hath so lytil penaunce yevyn the,
 That hast deservyd sorere for to smerte? 490
 But pete rennyth sone in gentil herte;
 That mayst thow sen, sche kytheth what sche is."
 And I answerde, "Nay, sere, so have I blys,
 No more but that I se wel sche is good."

Ne a trewe lover oghte me not to blame,
 Thogh that I spake a fals love-re som shame.
 They oghte rather with me for to holde
 For that I of Creseyde wroot or tolde,
 Or of the Rose, what so myn auctour mente. 470
 Algate, God woot, yt was myn entente
 To forthren trouthe in love, and yt cheryce;
 And to ben war fro falsnesse and fro vice
 By swiche ensample, this was my menynges."
 And she answerde, "Lat be thyn arguynge, 475
 For Love ne wol nat countrepleted be
 In ryght ne wrong; and lerne that of me;
 Thow hast thy grace, and holde the ryght therto.
 Now wol I seyn what penance thou shalt do
 For thy trespas, and understonde yt here, 480
 Thow shalt, while that thou lyvest yere by yere,
 The most partye of thy tyme spende
 In makynge of a glorious legende
 Of goode wymmen, maydenes and wyves,
 That weren trew in lovyng al hire lyves, 485
 And telle of false men that hem bytraien,
 That al hir lyfe ne do nat but assayen
 How many women they may doon a shame;
 For in youre worlde that is now holde a game!
 And thogh the lyke nat a love-re bee, 490
 Speke wel of love; this penance yive I the.
 And to the God of Love I shal so preye,
 That he shal charge his servantez, by any weye,
 To forthren thee, and wel thy labour quyte.
 Goo now thy weye, this penaunce ys but lyte; 495
 And whan this book ys maade, yive it the quene
 On my byhalfe, at Eltham or at Sheene."
 The God of Love gan smyle, and than he sayde,
 "Wostow," quod he, "wher this be wyf or mayde,
 Or queene or countesse, or of what degre 500
 That hath so lytel penance yiven thee
 That hast deserved sorere for to smerte?
 But pite renneth soone in gentil herte;
 That maistow seen, she kytheth what she ys."
 And I answered, "Nay, sire, so have I blys, 505
 Na moore, but that I see wel she is good."

466 oght. 480 *and om.* 484 good. 487 *line om.* 488 *they that.*
 502-3 *MS. defective.*

"That is a trewe tale, by myn hod," 495
 Quod Love, "and that thow knowist wel, parde.
 Yif it be so that thow avise the!
 Hast thow nat in a bok, lyth in thy cheste,
 The grete goodnesse of the queene Alceste,
 That turnede was into a dayesye; 500
 Sche that for hire husbonde ches to deye
 And ek to gon to helle, rathere than he;
 And Ercules rescued hire, parde,
 And broughte hyre out of helle ageyn to blys?"
 And I answerde agen, and seyde, "Yis, 505
 Now knowe I hire, and is this goode Alceste,
 The dayeseye, and myn owene hertes reste?
 Now fele I wel the goodnesse of this wif,
 That bothe aftyr hire deth and ek hire lyf
 Hire grete bounte doubelyth hire renoun. 510
 Wel hath sche quit me myn affeccoun
 That I have to hire flour, the dayesye;
 No wondyr is, thow Jove hire stellefyre,
 As tellyth Agaton, for hyre goodnesse!
 Hire white coroun beryth of it witnesse; 515
 For also manye vertuys hath sche
 As smale flourys in hyre coroun be.
 Of remembrauns of hire, and in honour,
 Cibella made the dayesye and the flour
 Icoroned al with whit, as men may se; 520
 And Mars yaf to hire corone red, parde,
 In stede of rubeis, set among the white."
 Therwith this queene wex red for schame a lyte,
 Whan sche was preysid so in hire presence.
 Thanne seyde Love, "A ful gret neglygence 525
 Was it to the, to write onstedfastnesse
 Of women, sithe thow knowist here goodnesse
 By pref, and ek by storyis here byforn.
 Let be the chaf, and writ wel of the corn.
 Why noldist thow han writyn of Alceste, 530
 And latyn Criseide ben aslepe, and reste?
 For of Alceste schulde thy wrytynge be,
 Syn that thow wist that calandier is she

 Of goodnesse, for sche taughte of fyn lovyng,
 And namely, of wifhod the lyvyng, 535

"That is a trewe tale, by myn hood,"
 Quod Love, "and that thou knowest wel, pardee,
 If yt be so that thou avise the!
 Hastow nat in a book, lyth in thy cheste, 510
 The grete goodnesse of the quene Alceste,
 That turned was into a daysye?
 She that for hire housbonde chees to dye,
 And eke to goon to helle, rather than he,
 And Ercules rescowed hire, parde, 515
 And broght hir out of helle agayne to blys?"
 And I answerd ageyn, and sayde, "Yis,
 Now knowe I hire; and is this good Alceste,
 The daysie, and myn owene hertes reste?
 Now fele I weel the goodnesse of this wyf; 520
 That both aftir hir deth and in hir lyf
 Hir grete bounte doubleth hire renoun.
 Wel hath she quyt me myn affeccioun
 That I have to hire flour, the daysye!
 No wonder ys thogh Jove hire stellyfye, 525
 As telleth Agaton, for hire goodenesse.
 Hire white corowne berith of hyt witnesse;
 For also many vertues hadde shee
 As smale florouns in hire corowne bee.
 In remembraunce of hire and in honoure 530
 Cibella maade the daysye and the flour
 Ycrowned al with white, as men may see;
 And Mars yaf to hire corowne reede, pardee,
 In stede of rubyes, sette among the white."
 Therwith this queene wex reed for shame a lyte, 535
 Whan she was preysed so in hire presence.
 Thanne seyde Love, "A ful grete negligence
 Was yt to the, that ylke tyme thou made

'Hyd, Absolon thy tresses' in balade,

That thou forgate hire in thi songe to sette, 540

Syn that thou art so gretly in hire dette,
 And wost so wel that kalender ys shee
 To any woman that wol lover bee;
 For she taught al the crafte of fyne lovyng,
 And namely of wyfhode the lyvyng, 545

And alle the boundys that sche aughte kepe.
Thy lityl wit was thilke tyme aslepe.
But now I charge the, upon thy lyf,
That in thy legende thou make of this wif,
Whan thou hast othere smale mad byfore;
And fare now wel, I charge the no more.

540

At Cliopatre I wele that thou begynne,
And so forth; and my love so shaltow wyne."

And with that word of slep I gan a-wake,
And ryght thus on my Legende gan I make.

Explicit prohemium.

543 shalt tow.

And al the boundes that she oghte kepe,
 Thy litel witte was thilke tyme a-slepe;
 But now I charge the, upon thy lyfe
 That in thy legende thou make of thys wyfe
 Whan thou hast other smale ymaade before. 550
 And fare now wel, I charge the namore.
 But er I goo, thus muche I wol the telle;
 Ne shal no trewe lover come in helle.
 Thise other ladies sittynge here arowe
 Ben in thy balade, yf thou kanst hem knowe; 555
 And in thy bookes alle thou shalt hem fynde.
 Have hem in thy legende now al in mynde;
 I mene of hem that ben in thy knowyng,
 For here ben twenty thousande moo sittynge
 Thanne thou knowest, that ben good wommen alle, 560
 And trewe of love for oght that may byfalle.
 Make the metres of hem as the lest,
 I mot goon home, the sonne draweth west,
 To paradys with al thise companye,
 And serve alwey the fresshe daysye! 565
 At Cleopatre I wole that thou begynne,
 And so forthe, and my love so shal thou wynne.
 For lat see now, what man that lover be
 Wol doon so stronge a peyne for love as she?
 I wot wel that thou maist nat al yt ryme, 570
 That swiche lovers diden in hire tyme;
 It were to long to reden and to here.
 Sufficeth me thou make in this manere,
 That thou reherce of al hir lyfe the grete,
 After thise olde auctours lysten for to trete; 575
 For whoso shal so many a storye telle,
 Sey shortly, or he shal to longe dwelle."
 And with that worde my bokes gan I take,
 And ryght thus on my Legende gan I make.

555 *thy* my. 560 *that* ben om. 561 *may* my. 565 *fressh*. 571 *swich*
 dide. 573 *suffich*.

THE LEGEND OF CLEOPATRA

Incipit legenda Cleopatrie regine.

Afftyr the deth of Tholome the kyng, 580
That al Egipt hadde in his governyng,
Regnede his queene Cleopataras;
Tyl on a tyme befel there swich a cas,
That out of Rome was sent a senatour,
For to conquern regnys and honour 585
Unto the Toun of Rome as was usaunce,
To han the world unto hyre obeysaunce;
And soth to seyne, Antonius was his name.
So fil it, as fortune hym aughte a schame
Whan he was fallyn in prosperite, 590
Rebel unto the Toun of Rome is he,
And ovyrall this, the sustyr of Cesar
He lafte hire falsly, or that sche was war,
And wolde algates han a nothir wif,
For which he tok with Rome and Cesar stryf. 595
Natheles, for sothe, this ilke senatour
Was a ful worthy gentyl werriour,
And of his deth it was ful gret damage.
But love hadde brought this man in swich a rage,
And hym so narwe boundyn in his las, 600
Al for the love of Cleopataras,
That al the world he sette at no value.
Hym thoughte there nas to hym nothyng so dewe
As Cleopatras for to love and serve.
Hym roughte nat in armys for to sterve 605
In the diffens of hyre, and of hire ryght.
This noble queene ek lovede so this knyght,
Thourgh his desert, and for his chyvalrye,
As certeynly, but if that bokys lye,

He was of persone and of gentillesse, 610
 And of discrecioun and of hardynesse,
 Worthi to ony wyght that lyvyn may;
 And sche was fayr as is the rose in May.
 And for to make shortly is the beste;
 Sche wax his wif, and hadde hym as hire leste. 615

The weddyng and the feste to devyse,
 To me that have ytake swich emprise
 Of so manye a story for to make,
 It were to longe, lest that I schulde slake 620
 Of thyng that beryth more effect and charge.
 For men may overlade a schip or barge
 And forthy, to thefeect thanne wele I skyppe,
 And al the remenaunt I wele lete slippe.

Octovyan, that wod was of this dede,
 Schop hym an ost on Antonye to lede, 625
 Al utyrly for his destruccioun,
 With stoute Romeynys, crewel as lyoun;
 To schepe they wente, and thus I lat hem sayle.

Antonius was war, and wele nat fayle
 To metyn with these Romeynys, if he may; 630
 Tok eek his red, and bothe, upon a day,
 Hys wif and he, and al his ost forth wente,
 To shepe anon, no lengere they ne stente;
 And in the se it happede hem to mete—
 Up goth the trompe! and for to schoute and schete, 635
 And peynede hem to sette on with the sunne;
 With grysely soun out goth the grete gonne,
 And heterly they hurtelyn al atonys.
 From the top down comyth the grete stonys;
 In goth the grapenel so ful of crokis, 640
 Among the ropis rennyth the scherynge hokys;
 In with the polax presith he and he;
 Byhyndyn the mast begynnyth he to fle;
 And out a-geyn and dryvyth hym overborde;

He styngith hym upon his sperys orde; 645
 He rent the seyl with hokys lyk a sithe;
 He bryngith the cuppe and biddyth hem to be blythe;
 He pouryth pesyn up on the hachis sledere;
 With pottis ful of lym they gon togedere.
 And thus the longe day togedere they spende, 650
 Tyl at the laste, as every thyng hath ende,
 Antonye is schent, and put hym to the flyght;
 And al his folk to-go, that best go myght.
 Fleth ek the queen, with al hire porpere sayl,
 For strokys whiche that wente as thikke as hayl; 655
 No wondyr was sche myghte it nat endure.
 And whan that Antonye saw that aventure,
 "Allas," quod he, "the day that I was born!
 My worshepe in this day thus have I lorn!"
 And for dispeyr out of his wit he sterte, 660
 And rof hymself anon thourgh out the herte,
 Or that he ferthere wente out of the place.
 His wif, that coude of Cesar have no grace,
 To Egypt is fled, for dred and for destresse.
 But herkenyth, ye that spekyn of kyndenesse, 665
 Ye men that falsely swere manye an oth,
 That ye wele deye, if that youre love be wroth,
 Here may ye sen of women which a trouthe!
 This woful Cleopatre hath mad swich routhe
 That ther is tunge non that may it telle; 670
 But on the morwe sche wolde no lengere dwelle,
 But made hire subtyl werkemen make a schryne
 Of alle the rubyis and the stonys fyne
 In al Egypte, that sche coude espie;
 And putte ful the schryne of spicerye, 675
 And let the cors enbaumme, and forth sche fette
 This dede cors, and in the schryne it schette,
 And next the schryne a pet thanne doth sche grave,
 And alle the serpentys that sche myghte have,

Sche putte hem in that grave; and thus sche seyde: 680
 "Now, love, to whom myn sorweful herte obeyede
 So ferforthly, that from that blisful our
 That I yow swor to ben al frely your,
 I mene yow, Antonius, my knyght!
 That nevere wakyng in the day or nyght 685
 Ye nere out of myn hertis remembraunce,
 For wel or wo, for carole or for daunce;
 And in myn self this covenaut made I tho,
 For ryght swich as ye feldyn, wel or wo,
 As fer forth as it in my power lay 690
 Unreprovable onto my wyfhod ay,
 The same wolde I fele, lyf or deth,
 And thilke covenant, whil me lastith breth,
 I wele fulfille, and that schal ben wel sene;
 Was nevere onto hire love a trewere quene." 695
 And with that word, nakyd, with ful good herte,
 Among the serpentis in the pit sche styrte,
 And there sche ches to havyn hire buryng.
 Anon the nadderys gonne hire for to styng,
 And sche hire deth receyvyth with good cheere, 700
 For love of Antonye that was hire so dere.
 And this is storyal soth, it is no fable,
 Now, or I fynde a man thus trewe and stable,
 And wele for love his deth so frely take,
 I preye God let oure hedys nevere ake. Amen. 705

*Explicit Cliopatra.*¹

¹The Legends follow of Thisbe, Dido, Hypsipyle and Medea, Ariadne, Philomela, Phyllis, and Hypermnestra.

685 nygh. 689 rygh. 693 comenant.

A COMPLEINT TO HIS LADY

(I. *Seven-line Stanzas*, 1)

The longe nyghtis whan every creature
Shuld have theyr rest in somewhat, as be kynde,
Or ellis ne may theyr lif nought longe endure,
It fallith most into my wooful mynde
How I so fer have brought my self behynde, 5
That, sauf the deth, ther may nothyng me lisse,
So disespaired I am from alle blisse.

(I. 2)

This same thought me lastith til the morow,
And from the morow furth til it be eve;
There nedith me no care for to borow, 10
For both I have gode leyser and goode leve.
Ther is no wight that wil my wo bireve
To wepe inough, and wailen al my fill;
The sore spark of peyne now doth me spill.

(3) [*Terza Rima*, 1]

The sore spark of peyne now doth me spill, 15
This love that hath me set in suche a place
That my desire never wil fulfill,
For neither pite, mercy, neyther grace
Can I nat fynde; and yit my sorowful hert
For to be dede, I can it nat arace. 20
The more I love, the more she doth me smert,
Thurgh whiche I se without remedye
That from the dethe I may in no wise astert.

(4) [II. *Terza Rima*, 2]

Now sothly what she hight, I wil reherce:
 Hir name is Bounte set in Wommanhede, 25
 Sadnesse in Yowth, and Beaute Prideles,
 And Plesaunce under Governauce and Drede.
 Hir surname is eke Faire Rowtheles
 The Wise iknyt unto Goode Aventure,
 That, for I love hir, she sleeth me giltles. 30
 Hir love I best, and shal, while I may dure,
 Better than my self, an hundred thousand dele,
 Than al this worldis riches or creature.
 Now hath nat Love me bestowed wele
 To love, there I never shal have part? 35
 Elas, right thus is turned me the whele!
 Thus am I slayn with Loves fury dart;
 I can but love hir best, my swete foo,
 Love hath me taught nomore of his art
 But serve alwey, and stynte for no woo. 40

(5) [III. *Ten-line Stanzas*, 1]

In my trewe careful hert there is
 So moche woo, and eek so litel blisse,
 That woo is me that ever I was bore.
 For alle thyng whiche I desire, I mysse,
 And al that ever I wold nat, Iwisse, 45
 That fynd I redy to me evermore;
 And of al this I not to whom me pleyne
 For she that myghte me out of this bryng
 Ne recchith nought, whether I wepe or synge,
 So litel rowth hath she upon my peyne. 50

(6) (III. 2)

Elas, whan slepyng tyme is, lo, than I wake;
 Whan I shuld daunce, for feere, lo, than I qwake,

This hevȳ liff I leede, loo, for yowre sake,
 Though ye therof in no wise heede take,
 Myn hertis lady, and hole my lives qwene, 55
 For trewly durst I sey, and that I fele,
 Me semeth that your sweete hert of steele
 Is whetted now ayeines me to kene.

(7) (III. 3)

My dere hert, and best be-loved foo,
 Why likith yow to do me al this woo? 60
 What have I don that grevith yow, or saide,
 But for I serve and love yow, and no mo,
 And while I live I wil ever do soo?
 And therfor, sweete, me beth nat evil apayed;
 For so goode and so faire as ye be, 65
 It were right grete wonder but ye had
 Of al servauntis, both of goode and bad,
 And lest worthy of al hem, I am he.

(8) (III. 4)

But nevertheles, my righte lady swete,
 Though that I be unkonnyng and unmeete 70
 To serve as I best kowde ay yowre hienesse,
 Yit is ther non fayner, that wolde I heete,
 Than I to do youre ease, or ellis beete
 What so I wist, that were to your distresse.
 And had I myght as goode as I have wil, 75
 Than shuld ye feele where it were so, or non;
 For in this world than livyng is ther non,
 That fayner wolde youre hertis wil fulfil.

(9) (III. 5)

For both I love, and eke drede yow so sore,
 And algatis mote, and have yow don ful yooore, 80

That bettir loved is non, ne never shal.
 And yit I wold besechen you of nomore
 But levith wele, and beth nat wroth therfore,
 And lete me serve yow forth, lo, this is al.
 For I am nat so hardy, ne so woode, 85
 For to desire that ye shuld love me,
 For wele I wote, elas, that wil nat be,
 I am so litel worthy, and ye so goode.

(10) (III. 6)

For ye be oon the worthyest on lyve,
 And I the most unlikly for to thryve. 90
 Yit, for al this, witeth ye right wele,
 That ye ne shul me from youre service dryve,
 That I ne wil ay with al my wittes fyve,
 Serve yow triewly what wo so that I fele,
 For I am sette on yow in suche manere, 95
 That though ye never wil upon me rewe,
 I must yow love, and bien ever als triew,
 As any man can, or may, on live here.

(11) (III. 7)

But the more that I love yow, goodly free,
 The lasse fynd I that ye loven me; 100
 Elas, whan shal that harde witte amend?
 Where is now al your wommanly pite,
 Youre gentilnesse, and your debonarite?
 Wil ye nothyng therof upon me spende?
 And so hoole, swete, as I am yowres al, 105
 And so grete wil as I have yow to serve,
 Now certis, and ye lete me thus sterve,
 Yet have ye wonne theron but a smal.

(12) (III. 8)

For, at my knowyng, I do nat why;
 And this I wil beseche yow hertily, 110
 That there ever ye finde, whiles ye live,
 A triewer servaunt to yow than am I,
 Loveth [hym] thanne, and sle me hardily,
 And [I] my deth to yow wil al forgyve.
 And if ye fynde no trewer [goodly free] 115
 Wil ye suffre than that I thus spil,
 And for no maner gilt but my goode wil?
 Als goode were thanne untriwe as triewe to be.

(13) (*Unique final stanza*, III. 9)

But I, my lif and deth, to yow obey,
 And with right buxum hert holy I prey, 120
 As youre most plesure is, so doth by me;
 For wele lever is me liken yow and dye,
 Than for to any thyng or thynk or say
 That yow myght offenden, in any tyme,
 And therfor, swete, rewe on my peynes smert, 125
 And of your grace grauntith me som drope,
 For ellis may me last no blisse ne hope,
 Ne dwelle withyn my trouble careful hert.

Explicit Pyte.

ANELYDA AND ARCYTE

Lo my lordis and ladyes Here folowyng may ye see the
maner of the lovyng bytwene Arcite of Thebes and Anelida
the faire Quene of Hermony which with his feyned chere
doublenesse and flateryng disceiued her withouten cause she
beyng than oon of the trewest gentilwomen that bere lyf
compleyneth her I beseche you.

Thow fierse god of armes, Mars the rede,
That in the frosty contrey called Trace,
Within thi gresly temple ful of drede
Honored art, as patroun of that place,
With thi Bellona, Pallas, ful of grace, 5
Be present, and my song contynue and guy;
At my begynnyng thus to the I cry.

For hit ful depe is sonken in my mynd
With pitous herte in Englishsh for to endite
This olde story in Latyne which I fynde, 10
Of quene Anelyda and fals Arcite,
That eelde, which that all can frete and bite,
As hit hath froten many a noble story,
Hath negh devoured oute of my memory.

Be favourable eke, thow Polymea, 15
On Parnaso that with thi sustren glade
By Ellicon, noght fer frome Cirea,
Syngest with voice memorial in the shade,
Undir the laurier which that may not fade;
And do that I my ship to haven wyne. 20
First folowe I Stace, and aftir that Corynne.

Whan Theseus, with werres longe and grete,
The aspre folke of Cithe had overcome,
With laurer corouned, in his chare gold-bete,

Home to his cuntre-houses is ecome, 25
 For which the people, blisfull hole and some,
 So crydon that unto the sterres it wente,
 And him to honuren, diden all her entente.

Beforene this duk, in signe of hie victorie,
 The trumpes came, and in his baner large 30
 The ymage of Mars; and tokenyng of his glorie,
 Men mighten seen of tresoure many a charge,
 Many bright helme, and many spere and targe,
 Many a fressh knyght, and blisful route,
 On hors and fote, in all the felde aboute. 35

Ypolita his wyf, the hardy quene
 Of Cithea, that he conquered had,
 With Emelye, her yonge sustir shene,
 Faire in a chaier of gold he with him ladde,
 That all the ground aboute the chare she sprad 40
 With brightnesse of the beaute in her face,
 Fulfilled of largesse and of alle grace.

With his tryumphe, of lawrier corouned thus,
 In all the floure of Fortunes yevyng
 Lete I this noble prince, this Theseus, 45
 Towardes Attenes in his wey ridyng;
 And fonde I woll in shortly for to bryng
 The slye wey of that I gan to write,
 Of quene Anelida and fals Arcyte.

Mars, which that thurgh his furious cours of yre, 50
 The olde wrath of Juno to fulfille,
 Hath sette the peoplis hertis both on fyre
 Of Thebes and Grece, yche othir for to kylle,
 With blody speris ne rested never stille
 But throng, now here, now there, amongis hem both, 55
 Tyll everich othir slough, so were thei wroth.

For whan Amphyorax and Tydius,
 Ypomedon, Parthonopee also
 Weren dede, and sleyn proude Campaneus,
 And whan the wrechid Thebans, bretheren two, 60
 Were slayne; and kyng Adrastus home ego,
 So desolate stode Thebes and so bare,
 That no wight coude remedy of his fare.

And whan that olde Creon gan espie
 How that the blode riall was brought adoun, 65
 He held that cite by his thyrrannye,
 And did the gentils of that regyoun
 To ben his frend, and wonen in the toune;
 So what for love of him, and what for awe,
 The noble folke were to the toune edrawe. 70

Amonges all thies, Anelida, the quene
 Of Ermony was in that toune duellyng,
 That feirer was than is the sonne shene
 Thurghoute the world so gan her name spryng
 That her to seen had every wight likyng. 75
 For, as of trouth, is there non her liche
 Of all the wymen in this worlde riche.

Yong was this quene, of twenty yere of elde,
 Of myddell stature, and of suche fairenesse
 That Nature had grete joy her to behelde; 80
 And for to speken of her stedfastnes,
 She passed hath Penelope and Lucesse,
 And shortly if she shall be comprehendid,
 In her ne myghte nothing be amendid.

This Theban knyght eke, Arcite soth to seyn, 85
 Was yong, and therewithall a lusty knyght,
 But he was double in love, and nothing pleyne,

57 Tedijs. 63 coude no. 65 edoun. 66 heled. 68 wonnen. 78 of om.
 80 beholde. 84 myght. 85 Arcite om.; the soth.

And subtill in that crafte over any wight,
 And with his connyng wan that lady bright.
 So ferforth, loo, he gan her trouth ensure, 90
 That she him trustith above eche creature.

What shuld I seyn? she lovid Arcyte so,
 That whan that he was absent any throwe,
 Anon her thought hir herte brast on two,
 For in her sight to her he bare him lowe, 95
 So that she wende have all his hert eknowe,
 But he was fals, hit nas but feyned chere,
 All nedith not to men suche crafte to lere.

But natheles, ful mychell besynesse
 Had he, or that he myght his lady wynne; 100
 And swore he wolde deye for distresse,
 Or from his witte he seyde he wolde twynne.
 Alas, the while! for hit was routh and synne,
 That she upon his sorowis wolde rewe.
 But nothing thenkith the fals as doth the trewe. 105

Hir fredome fonde Arcyte in suche maner
 That all was his that she hath, moche or lyte.
 Ne to no creature made she chere,
 Forther than that hit liked to Arcyte;
 Ther nas no lacke with whiche he myght her wite, 110
 Sheo was so ferforthe gyven him to plese,
 That all that liked him, hit did her ese.

There nas to hir no maner lettre sent
 That towchid love, from anye maner wyght
 That she ne shewid it him or it was brent, 115
 So pleyne she was, and did hir fulle might
 That she nil hyden nothing frome hir knyght,
 Lest he of eny untrouthe hir upbreyde,
 Withouten bode his heste sheo obeyde.

89 *wan* what. 94 *hert*. 101 *dey*. 102 *he seyde om*. 104 *wolden*.
 109 *to om*. 116 *ful*. 118 *upbroyde*. 119 *cleyde (?)*.

And eke he made him jalowse over hir, 120
 That what that any man had to hir seyde,
 Anoon he wolde preyen her to swere
 What was that worde, or maken him yvel apayde,
 Thanne wende sheo oute of her wyt have brayed,
 But all this nas but slight and flaterie, 125
 Withouten love, of feyned jalowsye.

And al this toke sheo so debonayrely,
 That al his wille, hir thought hit skilful thing;
 And ever the lenger sheo lovid him tendrely,
 And did him honour, as he were a kynge. 130
 Hir hart was to him weddid with a ringe;
 So ferforthe upon trowthe is hir entente
 That where he goothe hir herte with him wente.

When sheo shall ete, on him is al hir thought,
 That wele unnethe of mete tooke she keepe; 135
 And what that sheo was to hir reste ebrought,
 On him sheo thought alwey till that sheo slepe;
 Whan he was absent, prevely sheo weepe.
 Thus lyvethe fayere Anelyda the queene
 For fals Arcyte, that did hir al this tene. 140

This fals Arcite, of his nuwefangulnesse,
 For sheo to him so lovely was and trewe,
 Tooke lasse deyntee of hir stedfastnesse,
 And sawe anothere ladye, proude and nuwe,
 And ryght anoon he cladde him in her huwe, 145
 Woot I nowght whethir in white, rede, or grene,
 And falsed fayr Anelide the qwene.

But natheles, gret wondre was it noone
 Thawgh he were fals, for it is kynde of mane,
 Sithe Lamek was, that is so longe agoone, 150

128 *hit hir.* 130 *And An.* 131 *weddi.* 133 *his hert.* 137 *that om.*
 140 *al this that.* 147 *alshed that.* 150 *lanek.*

To been in love als fals as ever he cane;
 He was the firste fadre that begane
 To loven too, and liven in bygamy;e;
 And he founde tentis firste, but yf men lye.

This fals Arcyte, sumwhat moste he feyne, 155
 Whane he was fals, to cover his traitourye,
 Right as an hors that can boothe byte and pleyne,
 For he bare hir on honde of trecherye,
 And swore he coude hir dowbilnesse espie,
 And all was falsnesse, that sheo to him mente; 160
 Thus swore this theoff, and forthe his weye he wente.

Ellas, what herte myght endure it,
 For routhe and woo hir sorow for to tell,
 Or what man hath the connyng or the witte,
 Or what man myght within the chambre dwelle, 165
 Yf I to him rehersin shoulde the helle,
 Which sufferith faire Anelyda the Quene
 For fals Arcyte, that did her all this teene?

Sheo weopethe, waylethe, swoonethe pytously,
 To grounde sheo fallethe, dede as any stoone, 170
 Al craumpisshed hir lymmes crockedly.
 Sheo spekithe as hir witte were all agoone,
 Other coloure thanne asshe hath sheo noone,
 Noon othir worde spekithe sheo, muche or lyte,
 But "mercy, cruell herte myn, Arcyte!" 175

And thus endureth, til sheo was soo mate
 That sheo nathe foot on whiche sheo may sustene,
 But forthe langwissing ever in this estate,
 On which Arcyte hath rowthe noon ne teene;
 His herte was ellis where, nuwe and grene, 180
 That on hir woo nought deynd him to thinke,
 Him reccheth nought whether sheo fleete or synke.

152 that euer. 156 thratourye. 162 hart; endure. 174 luytle. 175 harte.
 177 foot om. 178 ever om. 182 swynke.

His nuwe ladye holdithe him so narowe
Up by the brydell, at the staves ende,
That every worde he drad hit as an arowe; 185
Hir daunger made him boothe bowe and beende,
And as hir lyst, made him tourne and wende;
For sheo ne graunted him in hir lyvyng
No grace, whi that he hathe luste to synge;

But drofe him forthe, unnethe list hir knowe 190
That he was sarvant unto hir ladishippe,
But leste that he were proude, sheo held him lowe;
Thus servethe he, withouten fee or shipe,
Sheo sent him nowe to lande and nowe to shipe;
And for sheo gave him daungere al his fille 195
Therefore sheo had him at hir owne wille.

Ensaumple of this, yee thrifty women all,
Taketh here Anelida and fals Arcyte;
That for hir list him dere herte calle,
And was soo meke, therefore he lovde hir luyte; 200
The kynde of mannes herte is to delighe
In thing that straunge is, alsoo God me save!
For what he may not gete, that wolde he have.

Nowe tourne we to Anelyda ageyne,
Which peynithe day by day in languisshing; 205
But whane sheo sawe that hir gate no gayne,
Uppon a day full soroufull wepyng,
Sheo caste hir for to make a compleyning,
And of hir owne honde sheo gane hit wryte,
And sent hit to hir Theban knyght, Arcyte. 210

The compleynte of Anelida the Quene of Hermonye upon
Arcyte borne of the blode riall of Thebes for his Doublesnesse.

So thirllithe with the poynt of remembraunce
The swerde of sorowe, whette with fals plesaunce,

185 *hit om.* 189 *that om.*; noo luste. 193 mete or shepe. 198 *here of; fals om.*
199 *That And.* 201 delight. 209 wreyte. 210 dann Arcyte.

Myn herte, bare of blisse and blak of huwe,
 That turnid is in quakyng all my daunce,
 My suretee in awhaaped countenaunce, 215
 Sithe it avaylithe nowght for to be trewe;
 For whoso trewest is, it shall hir rewe,
 That servithe love and dothe hir observaunce
 Alday till oon, and chaungethe for no newe.

I wot myselfe als welle als any wight, 220
 For I lovid oon with all myn herte and might
 More than myselfe, an hunderithe thousand sithe,
 And callid him myn hertes lyff, my knight,
 And was al his als fer as it was right;
 When he was glad thane was I evere blythe, 225
 And his disese was to me dethe als swythe;
 And he ageyne his trouthe me had plight
 For evermore, his ladye me to kythe.

Nowe is he fals, ellas! and causelesse,
 And of my woo he is so rewthelesse, 230
 That with oon worde him liste not oonys deyne
 To brynge ageyne my sorowfull hert in pese,
 For he is kaute up in another lese;
 Right as him liste, he laughethe at my peyne,
 And I ne can myne herte nought restreyne 235
 For to love him, alweye never the lesse;
 And of all this I note to whome me pleyne.

And shall I pleyne, ellas, that harde stounde!—
 Unto my foo that gave myn herte a wounde,
 And yette desirithe that myne harome be more? 240
 Nay, certes, for ther shall I never founde;
 Noon othir helpethe my soores for to sounde,
 My destenye hathe shapen it full yore.

213 hart; hues. 219 *and om.* 225 klythe. 226 For his desire.
 227 tought hathe me. 233 anether. 241 for certes ther; be founde.

I wolle noon other medecyne ne lore,
 I wolle ben ay there I was oones bounde; 245
 That I have seyde, beo seyde for evermore.

Ellas, wher is becomen your gentilnesse,
 Youre wordes full of plesaunce and humblesse,
 Youre observaunces, and so lowe manere,
 Youre awaytinges and youre besynesse 250
 Uppon me, that ye callid your mastresse,
 Youre soverayne ladye of this worlde here?
 Ellas, and is there neyther worde ne cheere
 Yee vouchensaff uppon myn hevinesse?
 Ellas, youre love, I bie it all to dere! 255

Nowe certes, swete, thaughe that yee
 Thus causelesse the cause be
 Of my dedely adversitee,
 Your manly raysoun aught it to respite
 To slee your frende, and namlie me, 260
 That never yitte in noo degree
 Offendid yowe, als wissely he
 That al wot, oute of woo my sowle quite!
 But for I was so pleyne, Arcyte,
 In all my werkes, much and lyte, 265
 And so besye yowe to delyte—
 Myn honour sauf—meke and kynde and free,
 Therfore ye putte on me this wyte,
 And als ye recche not a myte,
 Thaughe that the swerde of sorowe byte 270
 My woofull herte, thorowe your creweltee.

My swete foo, whye doo yee soo? for shame!
 And thenken yee, that fertherid be your name
 To love a newe, and be untrew? nay!
 And putte yowe in sclaudre nowe and blame 275

246 syde (2). 253 *Ellas om.*; there nowe. 259 for to. 269 myght. 271 harte.
 272 foo for.

For to do me adversite and grame,
 That love yowe moste, God, well thou woste, alwaye?
 Yitt come agayne, and yit be playne some daye,
 And than shall this that nowe is mis be game,
 And al forgyve, while that here live I maye. 280

Loo, herte myne! al this is for to seyne,
 As whethir shall I pray or elles pleyne?
 Which is the wey to do yowe to be trewe?
 For outhir mote I have yow in my cheyne,
 Or withe the dethe yee mutte departe us tweyne, 285
 Ther lithe noon othir meene weyes nuwe;
 For God so wissly of my soule ruwe,
 As verraylye yee slee me with the peyne,
 That may yee see unfeynid on myn huwe.

For thus ferforth have I my deth ysoghte, 290
 Myselfe I morder with my pryve thoghte,
 For sorou and routh of youre unkyndenes;
 I wepe, I wake, I faste, all helpeth noghte;
 I weyve joy that is to speke of oghte;
 I voyde companye, I flee gladdenes, 295
 Who may avaunte her bet of hevynes
 Then I? and to this plite have ye me broghte,
 Withoute gilte, me nedyth no witnes.

And shulde I preye and weyve womanhode?
 Nay rathere dye, than do soo creuell dede, 300
 And axse mercy causeles, what nede?
 And yf I pleyne what life that I lede,
 Thane wol yee laughe, I knowe it oute of drede.
 And yf that I to yowe myne othes beede
 For myn excuse, a scorne shall be my mede; 305
 Youre chere flourethe but it wolle not sede,
 Full longe a-gon I ought to have taken hede.

280 forgyven. 282 *As And*. 285 *twene*. 290 *soght*. This stanza from MS Tanner 346. 293 *wake wele*. 294 *weyve* voyde. 296 *avaunce*. 299 *weyve* venyme. 300 *than* that.

For thaughe I hade yowe nuwe to morowe agayne
 I myght als weele kepe Averyll from rayne
 As holde yow trewe, to make yowe stedfaste. 310
 Almyghti God, of trowthe soverayne,
 Where is the trowthe of man, whoo hathe it slayne?
 Sheo that hem trustithe shall hem fynde als faste,
 As in a tempeste is the roton maste.
 Is that a tame beste that is ay fayne 315
 To fleen aweye, when he is leeste agaste?

But mercy, swete, yf I myssaye,
 Have I ought saide oute of the waye?
 I not; my wytte is halffe awaye,
 I fare as dothe the songe of Chaunte-pleure; 320
 For nowe I pleyne, and now I playe,
 I am so mased that I deye.
 Arcyte hathe borne aweye the keye
 Of all my worlde, and my goode aventure.
 For in this worlde nys creature 325
 Wakyng in moore discomfiture
 Thane I, ne more sorowe endure;
 And yf I slepe a furlonge wey or tweye,
 Than thinkithe me that youre figure
 Before me stante cloothed in asure, 330
 To profren efte, and nuwe ensure
 For to be trewe, and love me til I deye.

The longe nyght this wonder sight I drye,
 And on the day for thilke afraye I dye,
 And of al this right nought, ewysse, yee rechche. 335
 Ne never mo myne eyen two beo drye,
 And to youre routh and to your trouthe I crye
 But welawaye! to fer ben thei to fecche;
 Thus holdithe me my destenye a wrechche.

But me to rede oute of this drede or gye 340
 Ne may my witte, so weyke is it, nought strecche.

Thanne eonde I thus, sithe I may do namore,
 And yeve it up for now and evir-more;
 For shall I never efte put in balaunse
 My sikurnesse, or leorne of love the lore. 345
 But as the swane, I have harde sey full yore,
 Ageynist his dethe shall syngen his penaunse,
 So sey I here my destenye or chaunce,
 How that Arcyte Anelyda so sore
 Hathe thrilled with the poynte of remembraunce. 350

When that Annelida, this wofull quene,
 Hath of her hande writen in this wise,
 With face dede, betwixe pale and grene,
 She felle a-swow, and sith she gan to rise,
 And unto Mars avowyth sacrifice, 355
 Withinne the temple, with a sorofull chere,
 That shapyn was, as ye shall aftyr here.

340 *gye crye.* 342 *eondid.* 351 This stanza from Tanner MS.

[*Unfinished.*]

THE FORMER AGE

(De Consolatione Philosophiæ of Boethius.)

Chawcer vp-on this fyfte metur of the second book.

A blysfyl lyf, a paysyble and a swete
Ledden the peples in the former age;
They helde hem paied of fructes that they ete
Whiche that the feldes yave hem by usage.
They ne were nat forpampred with owtrage; 5
Onknowyn was the querne and ek the melle,
They eten mast, hawes, and swych pownage,
And dronken water of the colde welle.

Yit nas the grownd nat wownded with the plowh,
But corn up sprong, unsowe of mannes hond, 10
The which they gnodded, and eete nat half inowh;
No man yit knewe the forwes of his lond,
No man the fyr owt of the flynt yit fonde;
Unkorven and ungrobbed lay the vyne;
No man yit in the morter spices grond, 15
To clarre, ne to sawse of galentyne.

No madyr, welde, or wod no litestere
Ne knewh, the fles was of his former hewe;
No flessch ne wyste offence of egge or spere;
No coyn ne knewh man, which is fals or trewe; 20
No ship yit karf the wawes grene and blewe;
No marchaunt yit ne fette owtlandissh ware;
No trompes for the werres folk ne knewe,
Ne towres heye, and walles rownde or square.

What sholde it han avayled to werreye? 25
Ther lay no profyt, ther was no rychesse;
But corsed was the tyme, I dar wel seye,

That men fyrst dede hir swety bysynesse
 To grobbe up metal, lurkyng in dirkenesse,
 And in the ryverys fyrst gemmys sowhte. 30
 Allas, than sprong up al the cursydnesse
 Of coveytyse, that fyrst ovr sorwe browhte!

Thyse tyrauntes put hem gladly nat in pres
 No wyldnesse, ne no busshes, for to wynne
 Ther poverte is, as seith Diogenes, 35
 Ther as vitayle is ek so skars and thinne
 That nat but mast or apples is therinne;
 But ther as bagges ben and fat vitaille,
 Ther wol they gon, and spare for no synne,
 With al hir ost the cyte forto asayle. 40

Yit was no paleis chaumbres, ne non halles,
 In kaves and in wodes softe and swete
 Sleptin this blyssed folk, withowte walles,
 On gras or leves in parfyte quite. 45
 No down of fetheres, ne no bleched shete
 Was kynd to hem, but in surte they slepte;
 Hir hertes were al on withowte galles,
 Everych of hem his feith to oother kepte.

Unforged was the hawberke and the plate;
 The lambyssh poeple, voyde of alle vyse, 50
 Hadden no fantesye to debate,
 But eche of hem wolde oother wel cheryce;
 No pride, non envye, non avaryce,
 No lord, no taylage by no tyranye;
 Umblesse and Pes, Good Feith, the emperice, 55
 [And Hertly Fredom used hem to gye.]

34 places wyldnesse. 42 in (2) om. 44 On or; joye reste and quite.
 50 voyded. 56 Line lost; the editor suggests the above. Skeat suggests:
 Fulfilled erthe of olde curtesye.

Yit was nat Juppiter the lykerous,
That fyrst was fadyr of delicacie,
Come in this world, ne Nembrot, desyrus
To regne, had nat maad his towres hye. 60
Allas! allas! now may men wepe and crye,
For in owre dayes nis but covetyse,
Dowblenesse, and tresoun, and envye,
Poyson, manslawhtre, and mordre in sondry wyse.

61 *men om.* 64 Poyson and.

ADAM SCRIVENER

Chauciers wordes a Geffrey unto Adame his owen scryveyne.

Adam scryveyne, if ever it thee byfalle,
Boece or Troylus for to wryten nuwe,
Under thy long lokkes thowe most have the scalle,
But after my makyng thowe wryte more truwe;
So oft a daye I mot thy werk renuwe,
It to corect, and eke to rubbe and scrape,
And al is thorough thy neglygence and rape.

FORTUNE

Le pleintif countre Fortune.

This wrecched worldes transmutacioun,
As wele or wo, now pore and now honour,
Withowten ordyr or wis descresyoun,
Governed is by Fortunes errour.
But natheles, the lakke of hyr favowr 5
Ne may nat don me syngen, thowh I deye,
'Jay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour;'
For fynaly, Fortune, I the deffye.

Yit is me left the lyht of my resoun,
To knowen frend fro foo in thi merowr. 10
So mochel hath yit thy whirlynge up and down
Itawht me for to knowen in an howr.
But trewely, no fors of thi reddowr
To hym that over hymself hath the maystrye!
My suffysaunce shal be my socour, 15
For fynaly, Fortune, I thee deffye.

O Socrates, thou stidfast chaumpyoun,
She never myhte be thi tormentowr;
Thow never dreddest hyr oppressyoun,
Ne in hyr chere fownde thow no savour. 20
Thow knewe wel deseyte of hyr colour
And that hir moste worshipe is to lye.
I know hir ek a fals dissimulour,
For fynaly, Fortune, I the deffye!

Le respounce de fortune a pleintif.

No man ys wrechchyd, but hymself yt wene, 25
And he that hath hymself hath suffisaunce.

1 worlde is. 2 poeere. 12 knowe. 18 myht. 21 the deseyte 22 most.
23 knew.

Whi seysthow thanne, y am to the so kene,
 That hast thyself owt of my governaunce?
 Sey thus, "graunt mercy of thyn haboundaunce,
 That thou hast lent or this." Why wolt thou stryve? 30
 What, woost thou yit how y the wol avaunce?
 And ek thou hast thy beste frende alyve.

I have the tawht devisyoun bytwene
 Frend of effect and frende of cowntenaunce,
 The nedeth nat the galle of no hyene 35
 That cureth eyen derkyd for penaunce.
 Now seist thou cleer that were in ignoraunce.
 Yit halt thin ancre, and yit thou mayst aryve
 Ther bownte berth the keye of my substaunce:
 And ek thou hast thy beste frende alyve. 40

How manye have I refused to sustene,
 Syn I the fostred have in thy plesaunce!
 Wolthow thanne make a statute on thy quene
 That I shal ben ay at thy ordynaunce?
 Thow born art in my regne of varyaunce, 45
 Abowte the wheel with oother most thou dryve;
 My loore is bet than wikke is thi grevaunce,
 And ek thou hast thy beste frende alyve.

Le Respounce du pleintif countre fortune.

Thy loore y dempne! it is adversyte.
 My frend maysthow nat reven, blynde goddesse. 50
 That I thy frendes knowe, I thanke to the;
 Tak hem agayn, lat hem go lye on presse.
 The negardye in kepynge hyr rychesse
 Prenostik is, thou wolt hir towr asayle;
 Wikke appetyt comth ay before sykenesse, 55
 In general this rewle may nat fayle.

Le respounce de fortune countre le pleintif.

Thow pynchest at my mutabylyte,
 For I the lente a drope of my rychesse;
 And now me lykyth to withdrawe me,
 Whi sholdysthow my realte apresse? 60
 The see may ebbe and flowen moore or lesse,
 The welkne hath myht to shyne, reyne, or hayle;
 Ryht so mot I kythen my brutelnesse,
 In general this rewle may nat fayle.

Lo, the excussyoun of the majeste 65
 That al purveyeth of his ryhtwysnesse,
 That same thinge 'Fortune' clepyn ye,
 Ye blynde beestys ful of lewednesse!
 The hevne hath proprete of sykyrnesse,
 This world hath ever resteles travayle. 70
 Thy laste day is ende of myn intresse,
 In general, this rewele may nat fayle.

Lenvoy de fortune.

Prynses, I prey yow, of yowre gentillesse,
 Lat nat this man on me thus crye and pleyne,
 And I shal quyte yow yowre bysynesse. 75
 At my requeste, as thre of yow or tweyne,
 That but yow lest releve hym of hys peyne,
 Preyeth hys beste frend of his noblesse,
 That to som betere estat he may attayne.

65 *the om.*; excussyoun. 71 *intersse*. 73 *best*.

MERCILES BEAUTE: A TRIPLE ROUNDEL

I.

Yowre yen two wolle sle me sodenly,
I may the Beaute of them not sustene,
So wondeth it thorowout my herte kene.
And but your word will helen hastily
Mi hertis wounde, while that hit is grene, 5
Your yen two wol sle me sodenly,
I may the Beaute of hem not sustene.

Upon my trouth I sey yow feithfully
That ye ben of my liffe and deth the quene;
For with my deth the trouthe shal be sene. 10
Your yen two wol sle me sodenly
I may the Beaute of them not sustene
So wondeth hit thorowout my herte kene.

II.

So hath your Beaute fro your herte chaced
Pitee that me navailleth not to pleyn, 15
For Danger halt your mercy in his cheyne.
Giltles my deth thus han ye me purchaced;
I sey yow soth, me nedeth not to fayn.
So hath your Beaute fro your herte chaced
Pite that me navailleth not to pleyn. 20

Allas that nature hath in yow compased
So grete Beaute, that no man may atteyn
To mercy, though he sterve for the peyn.

1 two yen. 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, etc. The refrain only indicated by two words
10 trouth.

*So hath your Beaute fro your herte chaced
Pite that me navailleth not to pleyne* 25
For Danger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

III.

Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I nevere thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.
He may answere and sey this or that; 30
I do no fors, I speke right as I mene,
Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat
I nevere thenk to ben in his prison lene.

Love hath my name istrike out of his sclat,
And he is strike out of my bokes clene 35
For evermo, this is non other mene,
Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I nevere thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free I counte him not a bene.

TO ROSEMOUNDE: A BALADE

Madame, ye ben of al beaute shryne
As fer as cerclid is the mapamonde;
For as the cristall glorious ye shyne,
And lyke ruby ben your chekys rounde.
Therwith ye ben so mery and so joconde 5
That at a revell whan that I se you dance,
It is an oynement unto my wounde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliaunce!

For thogh I wepe of teres ful a tyne,
Yet may that wo myn herte nat confounde; 10
Your seemly voys that ye so smal outtwyne
Makyth my thoght in joye and blys habounde.
So curtaysly I go, with love bounde,
That to myself I sey, in my penaunce,
"Suffyseth me to love you, Rosemounde, 15
Thogh ye to me do no daliaunce!"

Nas never pyk walwed in galauntyne
As I in love am walwed and iwounde;
For which ful ofte I of myself devyne
That I am trewe Tristam the secounde. 20
My love may not refreyde be nor affounde;
I brenne ay in an amoureuse plesaunce.
Do what ye lyst; I wyl your thral be founde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliance.

8 Thoght. 11 semy; *smal* fynall (Sk). 20 trew.

TRUTH

Fle fro the pres, and dwelle with sothefastnesse,
Suffise thin owen thing, thei it be smal;
For horde hathe hate and clymbyng tykelnesse,
Prees hathe envye, and wele blent overal.
Savoure no more thanne the byhove schal, 5
Reule weel thiself that other folk canist reede,
And trouthe schal delyvere, it is no drede.

Tempest the nought al croked to redresse
In trust of hire that tourneth as a bal.
Myche wele stant in litel besynesse, 10
Bywar therfore to spurne ageyns an al;
Stryve not as dothe the crokke with the wal.
Daunte thiself that dauntest otheres dede,
And trouthe shal delyvere, it is no drede.

That the is sent, receyve in buxhumnesse; 15
The wrestlyng for the worlde axeth a fal.
Here is non home, here nys but wyldernesse,
Forthe, pylgryme, forthe! forthe, bestc, out of thi stal!
Knowe thi contre! loke up! thonk God of al!
Holde the heye-weye, and lat thi gost the lede, 20
And trouthe shal delyvere, it is no drede.

[*L'envoy.*]

Ther-fore, thou vache, leve thine olde wrechedenesse
Unto the world; leve now to be thral.
Crie Hym mercy, that of Hys hie godnesse
Made the of nought and in especial 25
Drawe unto Hym, and pray in general
For the and eke for other hevenelyche mede,
And trouthe schal delyvere, it is no drede.

GENTILESSE

The firste stocke, fader of gentillesse,
What man desireth gentil for to be
Must folowe his trace, and alle his wittes dresse
Vertu to love, and vyces for to flee;
For unto vertu longeth dignite, 5
And nought the reverse, savelly dar I deme
Al were he miter, croune, or dyademe.

This firste stok was full of rightwisenesse,
Trewe of his word, sobre, pitous, and fre,
Clene of his goost, and loved besynesse 10
Ayenst the vyse of slouthe, in honestee;
And but his heire love vertue as did he,
He is nought gentil, thogh he riche seme,
Al were he myter, croune, or dyademe.

Vices may well be heire to olde richesse, 15
But ther may no man, as men may well se,
Biquethe his heire his vertuouse noblesse;
That is aproprid unto no degre,
But to the first fader in magestee,
That maketh his heires hem that can hym queme, 20
Al were he mytre, croune, or dyademe.

7 coroune miter. 8 first. 14, 21 coroune. 15 Vicesse. 17 vertues noblisse.
20 *can om.*

ENVOY TO SCOGAN

Litera directa de Scogon per. G. C.

To-brokene ben the statutis hye in hevene
That creat were eternally to dure,
Syn that I se the bryghte goddis sevene
Mow wepe and wayle, and passioun endure,
As may in erthe a mortal creature. 5
Allas, fro whennes may this thyng procede?
Of whiche errour I deye almost for drede.

Be word eterne whilhom was it schape
That fro the fifte serkele, in no manere,
Ne myghte a drope of teeris doun escape; 10
But now so wepyth Venus in hir spere,
That with hire teris sche wele drenche us here.
Allas, Skogon, this is for thyn offence,
Thu causist this deluge of pestelence.

Hast thou not seyde, in blaspheme of the goddis, 15
Thour pride, or thour thy grete rechelesnesse,
Swich thyng as in the lawe of love forbode is,
That for thy ladi saw not thy distresse,
Therefore thou yeve hire up at Mychelmesse!
Allas, Scogon, of olde folk ne yong, 20
Was nevere erst Scogon blamyd for his tong!

Thow drow in scorn Cupid ek to record
Of thilke rebel word that thou hast spoken;
For whiche he wele no lengere be thy lord.
And thow his bowe, Scogon, be not broken, 25
He wil not with his arwis ben iwroken
On the, ne me, ne none of oure figure;
We schal of him have neyther hurt ne cure.

1 *hye om.* 4 *pascioun.* 6 *whens.* 11 *his.* 14 *deluye.* 17 *forbodyn.*
20 *no thong.* 23 *the ilke.*

Now sertys, frend, I drede of thyn onhap,
 Lest for thy gilt the wreche of love procede 30
 On alle hem, that ben hore and round of schap,
 That ben so likly folk in love to spede.
 Thanne schal we for oure labour han no mede;
 But wel I wit, thou wilt answeze and seye,
 "Lo, olde Grisil leste to ryme and pleye." 35

Nay, Scogon, sey not so, for I me excuse,
 God helpe me so! in no rym douteles,
 Ne thynke I nevere of slep to wake my muse,
 That rustyth in myn schethe style in pes.
 Whil I was yong, I putte it forth in pres; 40
 But al schal passyn that men prose or ryme,
 Tak every man his torn, as for his tyme.

Envoy.

Scogan, that knelist at the wellis hed
 Of grace, of alle honour and worthynesse, .i. Wyndisore
 In the ende of wich strem I am dul as ded, 45
 Forgete in solitarie wildirnes, i. a Grenewych
 Yit, Scogan, thynk on Tullius kyndenes;
 Mynne thy frend, there it may fructife,
 Farewel, and loke thou nevere eft Love defye!

39 schede. 47 thyng. 48 Mynewe.

LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE

Geffrey Chauncier sende these Balades to kyng Richard.

Sumtyme this world was so stedefast and stable
That mannes word was obligacioun,
But now it is so fals and disceyvable
That word and dede, as in conclusioun,
Ben nothyng on, for turned up so doun 5
Is al this world for mede and wilfulnesse,
That al is lost for lak of stedefastnesse.

What maketh this world to be so variable
But lust that folkis han in discensioun?
For nowadayes a man is holde unable 10
But yf he can, by som collusioun,
Do to his neyghbur wrong or oppressioun.
What causeth that but wilful wrecchednesse,
That al is lost for lak of stedefastnesse?

Trouthe is put doun, resoun is holde fable; 15
Vertu hath now no domynacioun;
Pyte exiled, no man is mercyable;
Thurgh covetyse is blent discrecioun;
The world hath mad a permutacioun
Fro ryght to wrong, fro trouthe to fikulnesse, 20
That al is lost for lak of stedefastnesse.

Lenvoy.

O prince, desyre to be honorable,
Cherysshe thi folk, and hate extorcioun;
Suffre no thyng that may be reproveable
To thyn estate don in thi regioun. 25
Shewe forth thi swerd of castigacioun,
Drede God, do lawe, love trouthe and rightwesnesse,
And dryve thi peple agayn to stedefastnesse.

LENVOY DE CHAUCER A BUKTON

My maister Bukton, whan of Criste our kyng
Was axed, what ys trouthe or sothefastnesse,
He nat a worde answerde to that axinge,
As who saith: "Noo man is al trewe, I gesse."
And therefore, though I highte to expresse 5
The sorwe and woo that is in mariage,
I dar not writen of hyt noo wikkednesse,
Leste y myself falle eft in swich dotage.

I wol nat seyn, how that hyt is the cheyne
Of Sathanas, on which he gnaweth evere; 10
But I dar seyn, were he oute of his peyne,
As by his wille he wolde be bounde nevere.
But thilke doted foole that efte hath levere
Ycheyned be than out of prison crepe,
God lete him never fro his woo dissevere, 15
Ne noo man him bewayle, though he wepe.

But yet, lest thow doo worse, take a wyfe;
Bet ys to wedde than brenne in worse wise,
But thow shalt have sorwe on thy flessch thy lyfe,
And ben thy wifes thral, as seyn these wise; 20
And yf that hooly writte may nat suffyse,
Experience shal the teche, so may happe,
That the were lever to be take in Frise,
Than eft to falle of weddyng in the trappe.

Envoy.

This lytel writte, proverbes, or figure 25
I sende yow, take kepe of hyt, I rede.

Unwise is he that kan noo wele endure,
Yf thow be siker, put the nat in drede.
The Wyfe of Bathe I pray yow that ye rede
Of this matere that we have on honde,
God graunte yow your lyfe frely to lede
In fredam, for ful harde is to be bonde.

30

32 it is.

THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS

And filowing begynneth a balade translated out of frenshe
into englishe by Chaucier Geffrey the frenshe made sir
Otes de Grauntsome knight Savosyen.

Ther nys so hye coumfort to my plesaunce,
Whane that I am in any hevynesse,
As for to have leyser of remembraunce
Upon the manhoode and the worthynesse, 5
Upon the trouthe and the stedfastnesse
Of him, whos I am always, whyle I may dure;
Ther aught to blamen me no creature,
For he is croppe and roote of gentylesse.

In him is bountee, wysdam, and gouvernaunce,
Weel more thanne any mannes wit kan gesse; 10
For grace hathe wolde so ferfoorth the him avaunce,
That of knighthoode he is parfyt rychchesse.
Honnour honoureth him for his noblesse;
Therto so wel hathe fortuneth him Nature,
That I am his for ever, I him ensure, 15
For every wight preysethe his gentylesse.

And nought-withstanding al his souffisaunce,
His gentyle hert is of so gret humblesse
To me, in worde, in werk, in countenaunce,
And me to serve is al his besynesse, 20
That I am sette in verray sikurnesse;
Thus aught me wele to blesse myn aventure,
Sith that him list me serve and honneure,
For every wight preysethe his gentylesse.

II.

Nowe certes, Love, hit is right covenable 25
That men ful soore abyethy noble thing,

As waake abedde, and fasting at the table,
Weping to laughe, and sing in compleyning,
And doune to caste vysage and looking,
Offtymes to chaunge huwe and countenaunce, 30
Pleye in sleping, and dremen at the daunce,
Al the revers of any glaade felyng.

Thaughe jalousye wer hanged by a kable,
Sheo wolde al knowe, thorughe hir espying;
Ther doothe no wight no thing so raysonnable 35
That al nys harme in hir ymagynyng;
Thus deere abought is love in gyving,
Whiche offt he gyvethe withoute ordeynaunce,
As sorowe enoughe, and lytel of plesaunce,
Al the revers of every glaade feeling. 40

A lytel tyme his gyfft is agreable,
But ful encumberous is the using;
For soutyle jalousye the deceyvable
Ful offten-tymes causethe destourbing,
Thus beon we ever in dreed souffering, 45
In nouncertaine we langwisshe in penaunce,
And have wel offt many an herd meschaunce,
Al the revers of every glaade feelyng.

III.

But certes, Love, I say not in suche wyse,
That for teschape oute of youre lace I ment, 50
For I so long have beon in youre servyce
That for to leet of wol I never assente;
No force, thaughe Jalousye me more tourment,
Souffisethe me to seon him whane I may,
And therfore, certes, unto myn eending day, 55
To love him best ne shal I never repent.

And certes, Love, whanne I me weel avyse
 On any estate, that man may represent,
 Thane have yee maked me, thorughe youre fraunchyse,
 Cheese the best, that ever on eorthe went. 60
 Nowe love weele, hert, and looke thou never stent,
 And let the jalouse put it nowe in assaye,
 That for no peyne ne shal I never sey naye,
 To love him best, ne never to repent.

Herte, to the hit aught enoughe souffyse, 65
 That Love so hye a grace hathe to thee sent,
 To cheese the worthyest of alle wyse,
 And mooste agreable, unto myn entent;
 Seeche nowe no firther, neyther wey ner went,
 Sythe I have souffysaunce unto my paye, 70
 Thus wol I eonde this compleynt or this laye,
 To love him best, and never to repent.

Lenvoye.

Pryncesse, resceyvethe this complaynt in gree,
 Unto youre excellent benignytee
 Dyrect, after my lytel souffysaunce; 75
 For eelde, that in my spiryt doullethe me,
 Hathe of thendyting al the subtylytee
 Welnyeghe byrafft out of my remembraunce;
 And eeke to me it is right gret penaunce,
 Sith ryme in Englisshe hathe suche skarsytee, 80
 To folowen word by word the curyosytee.
 Of Graunsome, flour of hem that make in Fraunce.

Hit is sayde that Graunsome made this Last balade for
 Venus resembled to my lady of york aunswering the com-
 playnt of Mars.

THE COMPLAYNT OF CHAUCER TO HIS PURSE

To yow, my purse, and to noon other wight
Complayn I, for ye be my lady dere.
I am so sory now that ye been lyght,
For certes, but yf ye make me hevy chere,
Me were as leef be layde upon my bere; 5
For whiche unto your mercy thus I crye,
Beeth hevy ageyne, or elles mote I dye.

Now vouchethsauf this day or hyt be nyght,
That I of yow the blisful sounne may here,
Or see your colour lyke the sonne bryght, 10
That of yelownesse hadde never pere.
Ye be my lyfe, ye be myn hertys stere,
Quene of comfort and of good companye;
Beth hevy ayeyne or elles moote I dye.

Now, purse, that ben to me my lyves lyght, 15
And saveour as doun in this worlde here,
Oute of this tounne helpe me thurgh your myght,
Syn that ye wole nat bene my tresorere;
For I am shave as nye as is a ffrere,
But yet I pray unto your curtesye, 20
Bethe hevy ayen, or elles moote I dye.

Lenvoy de Chaucer.

O conquerour of Brutes Albyoun,
Whiche that by lygne and free eleccioun
Been verray kynge, this song to yow I sende!
And ye, that mowen alle myn harme amende, 25
Have mynde upon my supplicacioun!

PROVERBS

What shal thees clothes many fold,
Loo, this hoote somers day?

Affter gret heet komethe cold,
No man cast his pilche away.

Quod Chaucer.

Of this worlde the wyde compas,
Hit wol not in myn armes tweyne;

5

Who so mychel wol embrace,
Lytel ther-of he shal destreyne.

Quod Chaucer.

WOMMANLY NOBLESSE

Balade that Chaucier made.

So hath my herte caught in remembraunce
Yowre Beaute hoole, and stedfast governaunce,
Yowre vertues al, and yowre hie noblesse,
That yow to serve is set al my plesaunce.
So wel me likith youre womanly contenaunce, 5
Youre fresshe fetures and youre comlinesse,
That while I live, my hert to his maystresse
Yow hath ful chose, in triew perseveraunce,
Never to chaunge for no maner distresse.

And sith I shal do this observaunce 10
Al my lyve withouten displesaunce,
Yow for to serve with al my besynesse,
[Take my service in gre, and nat grevaunce,]
And have me somewhat in your souvenaunce.
My woful herte suffrith grete duresse; 15
And [lo] how humb[le]ly, with al symplesse,
My wil I conforme to your ordynaunce,
As you best list, my peynes for to redresse.

Considryng eek how I hange in balaunce
In your servyce; swiche, lo, is my chaunce, 20
Abidyng grace, whan that yowre gentillesse
Of my grete wo list doon allegeaunce,
And with your pite me som wyse avaunce,
In ful rebatyng of myn hevynesse;
And thinkith be raison, that wommanly noblesse 25
Shuld nat desyre til do the outraunce
Theras she fyndith non unbuxumnesse.

Lenvoye.

Auctour of norture, lady of plesaunce,

Soveraigne of beaute, floure of wommanhede,
Take ye non hede unto myn ignoraunce,

30

But this receyvith of your goodlyhede,
Thynkyng that I have caught in remembraunce
Yowre beaute hole, your stidefast governaunce.

NEWEFANGELNESSE

Against Women Inconstant.

(1)

Madame, for your newefangelnesse,
Manie a servaunt have ye put oute of grace.
I take my leve of your unstedfastnesse;
For wel I wote, while ye to lyve have space,
Ye kunnought love ful half yeer in a place, 5
To newe thinges your lust is ever kene,
In sted of blue, thus may ye were al grene.

(2)

Right as a mirrour, that nothing may enpresse,
But lightly as it cometh, so mot it pace,
So fareth your love; your werkes bereth witnesse. 10
Ther is no feith that may your hert embrace;
But as a wedercok, that turneth his face
With every wynd, ye fare, and that is sene;
In sted of bliwe, thus may ye were al grene.

(3)

Ye might be shrined for your brotilnesse 15
Bettir thanne Dalide, Cresside, or Candace,
For evere in changeng stondeth your sikernessee;
That tacche may no wight fro your hert arace;
Yif ye lese oon, ye kunne wel tweine purchase;
All light for somer—ye wote wel what I mene— 20
In sted of blewe, thus may ye were al grene.

2 of your. 6 so kene. 15 *your om.*

Explicit.

PREFACE TO THE TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE

Litell Lowys my sone, I have perceived wele by certeyne evidences thine abilite to lerne sciencez touchinge noumbres and proporcious; and as wel considere I thy bisi preyere in special to lerne the Tretis of the Astrelabie. Than, for as mechel as a filosofre seith, "He wrappeth him in his frend, that condescendeth to the rihtful preiers of his frend," therfor have I geven the a suffisaunt Astrelabie as for owre orizonte, compowned after the latitude of Oxenford; upon which, by mediacion of this litel tretis, I purpose to teche thee a certain of conclusions apertenying to the same instrument. I seye a certain of conclusiouns for three causes. The furste cause is this: truste wel that alle the conclusiouns that han ben fownde, or elles possibli myhten be fownde in so noble an instrument as an Astralabie, ben unknowe perfitley to any mortal man in this regioun, as I suppose. Another cause is this: that sothly in any tretis of the Astrelabie that I have seyn, there ben some conclusions that wole nat in alle thinges performen hir byhestes; and some of hem ben to harde to thy tendre age of ten yer to conseyeve.

This tretis, divided in fyve parties, wole I shewe the under ful lighte rewles and naked wordes in Englissh, for Latyn ne kanstow yit but smal, my lite sone. But natheles, suffise to thee thise trewe conclusiouns in Englissh, as wel as suffiseth to thise noble clerkes Grekes thise same conclusiouns in Grek, and to Arabiens in Arabik, and to Jewes in Ebrew, and to the Latyn folk in Latyn; whiche Latyn folk han hem furst out of othre diverse langages, and writen

in hir owne tonge, that is to sein, in Latyn. And
 God wot, that in alle these langages, and many mo,
 han these conclusiouns ben suffisantly lerned and
 tawht, and yit by diverse rewles, ryht as diverse 35
 pathes leden diverse folk the rihte wey to Roome.
 Now wol I prey mekly every discret persone that
 redith or herith this litel tretis, to have my rewde
 endytyng for excused, and my superfluite of wordes,
 for two causes: the firste cause is, for that curios 40
 enditing and hard sentence is ful hevy atones for
 swich a child to lerne. And the seconde cause is this;
 that sothly me semeth betre to writen unto a child
 twies a good sentence, than he forget it ones. And
 Lowis, yif so be that I shewe thee in my lihte 45
 Englissh as trewe conclusiouns touching this matere,
 and nawht only as trewe but as many and as subtil
 conclusiouns as ben shewed in Latyn in ani com-
 mune tretis of the Astrelabie, kon me the more
 thank; and preye God save the kyng, that is lord 50
 of this langage, and alle that him feyth bereth and
 obeith, everech in his degree, the more and the lasse.
 But considere wel, that I ne usurpe nat to have
 fownde this werk of my labour or of myn engin; I
 nam but a lewd compilatour of the labour of olde 55
 Astrolog[i]ens, and have hit translated in myn
 Englissh only for thi doctrine; and with this swerd
 shal I slen envie.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

- I. Pronunciation. §1-4.
- II. Language. §5-33.
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I. Pronunciation.

§1. Pronunciation of the Middle English of Chaucer. The beginner will find the vowels his chief difficulty in Chaucerian pronunciation. The consonants are pronounced nearly as by a Scotchman today; that is to say, the **r** is trilled, and **gh** has the sound of the Scottish **ch** in **loch**. Words derived from the French retained more of the French distinctness of utterance; **-cion**, **-tion**, **-sion**, **-ssion** kept the distinct **ci-on**, **ti-on**, **ssi-on**, with no **sh** sound. French **-ge**, as in **age**, retained the soft **zh** sound, **gn** the **ñ** sound of **cañon**. **Kn** as in German **Knabe**, kept the original sound; and **ng** retained the full sound of the **g** as in **anger**, not as in **singer**. **Th** in certain proper names probably was **tt**, as in **Thopas**, **Atthenes**; elsewhere as in modern English. Other consonants were sounded nearly as they are today.

§2. The vowels present more difficulty. In general, one should keep in mind the values of vowels in Continental languages, rather than in modern English. The three most difficult rules to remember are (1) **a** always as in German **Mann** or **Vater**; (2) **e** in long syllables always as **è** or **é** in French, not as in **mere**, **weed**; (3) doubling of vowels does not change the sound except to lengthen it; thus **boote** is like modern **boat**, not modern **boot**; **heede** is like modern **hayed**, not like our **heed**. The other rules are simple, and easily kept in mind; most errors are due to forgetfulness of the rules just given.

§3. Table of vowel-sounds.

Short.	Long.
a as in Ger. Mann .	aa, ā as in father .
e as in then .	ē open as in where , or ē closed as in way . Chaucer rarely rimes open and close long e (ex. lere, here); but the rime does occur. Most Americans can make little distinction in the sounds.
i, y as in inn .	ī, ŷ as in gasoline . Found in words which today have the diphthongal i sound: life, hide, child, plight (ME plit). But note that ME words in -ght have the short i : lyght, myghte .
o as in Ger. Gott .	ō open as in more , and ō close as in boat . The distinction is of little value to the beginner. Chaucer evidently felt free to break the rule against riming ō open and close.*
u as in full , rarely as in cup . Written often o in words which today have a ū sound: moche (much), sonne (sun), ronne (run), companye ; also in dore, spore, wolle .	ū as in compute, suit .
ay, ey as ai in straits . ou, ow as in French doux , English you .	

* By the use of the etymologies given in the Glossary, the student can readily distinguish between open and close **ō**, open and close **ē**, if he observes the rules here given: (1) ME open **ē** is found in words which in AS had **æ, e, ēa**; (2) ME close **ē** is found in words which in AS had **ē, e** before **-ld, ēo**, and also in ME final **ē**; (3) ME open **ō** is found in words which in AS had **ā, ā** (from **æ, ea**), **o** in open syllables, and before **-ld**; (4) ME close **ō** is found in words which in AS had **ō** (also in ON **ó**).

Diphthongs.

au as **ou** in **house**, or as **au** in German **aus**.

ew, **ě** plus **oo**,* **fewe**, **newe**, **trewe** (not as in modern pronunciation).

oi as in modern speech, **joye**.

§4. **Doubling** of vowels, as has been said, indicates a long vowel only, not a different sound from the single vowel, as in our writing. Doubled consonants were, as in modern German, given full value; **son-ne**, **ron-ne**.

II. Language.

§5. **Chaucer's Language.** Chaucer's language was that of the London of his day, which grammarians now call the Southeast Midland dialect of Middle English. Soon after his time this dialect became the standard English speech, especially after the establishment of Caxton's press at Westminster (1477); so that our own literary language descends directly from Chaucer's dialect.

§6. Before the stage known as Middle English, in the centuries previous to 1150, lies the stage which we call Anglo-Saxon, or Old English, the chief monument of which is the epic poem *Beowulf*. Anglo-Saxon may be distinguished from Middle English by its more elaborate system of inflections in nouns and verbs, and its freedom from the influence of French. Apart from some words of Danish or Norse (Scandinavian) origin, and a very few from Latin, Old English was a "self-supporting" tongue.

§7. Middle English, on the other hand, received many words from French, either through the dialect of the Normans in England (Anglo-French, "AF"), or later through the Old French of the Continent ("OF"). The inflections which in Anglo-Saxon are only slightly less numerous than in classical Latin, were mostly lost, or reduced to a common stage, that known as final **-e**.

§8. **Final -e.** This suffix, the distinguishing feature of Middle English, has been long lost as a syllable, though retained in the spelling of many words. In Chaucer's day it was already beginning to disappear in pronunciation; but

* Almost as in our mimicking of a dandy's **vewy** for **very**.

the memory of it was still sufficiently fresh in England to permit its use in the counted syllables, chiefly unaccented, of poetry. The similar use of **-e** in contemporary French poetry, which had a great influence on English literature, no doubt assisted its preservation. On the other hand, some poets of Chaucer's day did not employ the final **-e** as a pronounced syllable. William Parys, the squire of Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick—whose son, Lord William Beauchamp, was a friend of Chaucer's—wrote a poem, *St. Cristine*, in 1397, in which the **-e** is practically non-existent.* It is certain, also, that Chaucer felt free, in some circumstances, to neglect or slur this syllable—that is to say, to count ten syllables in a line of decasyllabic verse, regardless of some of the syllables ending in **-e**, **-es**, **-ed**, and even **-eth**.

§9. The manuscripts of Chaucer's poems, which now exist, were written after Chaucer's death. In the case of the shorter poems, the manuscripts are perhaps fifty years later. They exhibit, to various degrees, many final **-e**'s which were never sounded in speech, since they did not represent any syllabic ending in Anglo-Saxon or Old French. As we do not possess any manuscripts in Chaucer's handwriting, we do not know whether he was in the habit of writing these or not; in other words, whether the manuscripts of Chaucer in any way represent his own spelling. Believing that any reconstruction of Chaucer's spelling, from the extant manuscripts, is impossible at present, the editor prefers to exhibit the actual spelling of a trustworthy manuscript of each work.† If the student learns carefully the following rules for the

* The **-e**'s in black type in the stanza below would have been normally sounded in Chaucer. This copy of Parys is from MS. Arundel 168, folio 4b, Brit. Mus.

Seint Cristyne, helpe thorough thi prayer
 That we may fare the better for the,
 That hath ben longe in prisoun here,
 The Ile of Man, that stronge cuntre;
 Sir Thomas Beawchamp, an erle was he,
 In Warwikshire was his power,
 Now is he of so povre degre,
 He hath no man, save on squier.

† The marks of abbreviation above final **r**, **p**, and **n** (where **-e** is possibly meant) have not been expanded. Otherwise the MS. text spellings are used.

sounding of final **-e**, the spelling of the manuscripts will give him no trouble; and he will understand better the history of Chaucer criticism and of our own texts than from a so-called "normalized" text.

§10. Final **-e** generally appears in the Middle English poetry of Chaucer with syllabic value in the following forms:

(a) In certain nouns of Anglo-Saxon or other Germanic origin.* Ex. **bere, bowe, drope, erthe, herte, eye, leche, sone, answere, bote, comynge, mayde, cloude, tere, drede.**

(b) In nouns of Romance (Old French) origin which originally ended in **-e** mute. Ex. **age, chere, cure, distresse, gyse, lettre, madame, route, signe, substaunce, violence, vileynye.**

(c) In some Romance nouns which did not originally end in **-e**. Ex. **travayle, mene.**

(d) In certain nouns preceded by prepositions, representing an old (petrified) dative in **-e**. Ex. **on honde, in toune.**

(e) In certain adjectives of Germanic origin. Ex. **grene, mylde, thikke.**

(f) In Romance adjectives, ending in **-e** mute. Ex. **digne, huge, humble.**

(g) In some Romance adjectives which did not end in **-e** mute. Ex. **clere, comune, secounde.**

(h) In adjectives preceded by a possessive or demonstrative pronoun, or by the definite article; i.e., in the "definite" or "weak" form of adjectives. Ex. **the beste rym, my dere foo, this swete preest.**

(i) In adjectives in the vocative, preceding their noun. Ex. **O longe day! Now, faire lady! Leve brother! Seynte Marie!†**

(j) In the plural of monosyllabic adjectives, and occasionally of polysyllabic adjectives where the meter may require it. Ex. **gode men, longe nyghtes, the frendlyeste men.**

(k) In adverbs of Anglo-Saxon origin, ending in **-e**. Ex. **clene, depe, lowde, sodeynliche.** But **ryght** and **lyk**.

(l) In certain particles of adverbial or prepositional use. Ex. **aboute, bothe, bysyde, sone.**

* See §15 below for details. The etymologies in the Glossary are intended to guide the student in observing these nouns, and similar sources of **-e**.

† On **seinte**, see the Glossary.

(m) In verbs, in

- (1) The first person singular, present indicative: **I wake.**
- (2) The plural present indicative: **We wake (waketh, waken).**
- (3)* The singular and plural present subjunctive: **If he wake.**
- (4) The imperative second person singular and plural of most weak verbs: **Leve wel.**
- (5) The infinitive: **To telle (tellen).**
- (6) The verbal noun: **Comynge.**
- (7) The perfect participle of strong verbs: **She was i-founde.**
- (8) The preterite indicative, first and third persons singular, of weak verbs (ending in **-ed, -t**, in modern English): **I wenede, wende.**
- (9) Preterite indicative, second person singular of strong verbs: **thou founde, thou woke.**
- (10) Preterite plural of all verbs: **they wente, we songe.**
- (11) Preterite subjunctive, all verbs: **er that he sawe.**

§11. Final **en** appears in

- (a) The plural of certain nouns: **sustren, shoon.**
- (b) Certain particles: **aboven, withouten.**
- (c) The infinitive: **to singen.**
- (d) The plural forms of verbs: **they wenten, we that singen.**
- (e) The past participle of strong verbs.
- (f) Reflexive pronouns: **myselven.**

§12. Final **es** appears in

- (a) The possessive singular of nouns: **wommannes counseil.**
- (b) The plural of nouns: **dogges, hogges.**
- (c) Some adverb forms: **ones, twyes.**

The above list is intended for ready reference only. Chaucer's system of inflections, with their chief Anglo-Saxon equivalents, are given in fuller detail in the sections that follow.

§13. **The Noun.** In Anglo-Saxon nouns are divided into two classes, according as the stem originally ended in a vowel or in a consonant. Vowel-stems make up the strong, stems in **-n** the weak declension. Other consonantal stems are grouped by themselves. Owing to the loss in primitive or prehistoric Anglo-Saxon of final short vowels and of final

consonants of stems, it is not possible in Anglo-Saxon to distinguish all these classes at first glance. Comparative study of other Germanic tongues, such as Gothic and Old Norse, has therefore been employed. Various case-endings had also been lost before the historic period of Anglo-Saxon, so that the English language, at its earliest known stage, was already a language of partly leveled inflections. The Middle English of Chaucer, and our own modern English, represent further steps along this same course of development.

§14. It is not proposed here to give an outline of all Anglo-Saxon inflections, but only of such as are perhaps sufficient to illustrate the development of Chaucerian English. A few only of the several types of noun-inflection are given.

a-stems.				
	masc.	M. Eng.	neut.	M. Eng.
Sing. Nom.	stān	(stoon)	word	(word)
Gen.	stānes	(stoones)	wordes	(wordes)
Dat.	stāne		worde	
Acc.	stān		word	
Pl. Nom. Acc.	stānas	(stoones)	word	(wordes)
Gen.	stāna		worda	
Dat.	stānum		wordum	
ō-stems.				
	fem.	M. Eng.	fem.	M. Eng.
Sing. Nom.	giefu, -o	(gyft)	cwēn	(quene)
Gen.	giefe	(gyftes)	cwēne	(quenes)
Dat.	giefe		cwēne	
Acc.	giefe			
Pl. Nom. Acc.	giefe, -a	(gyftes)	cwēne	(quenes)
Gen.	giefa, (-ena)		cwēna	
Dat.	giefum		cwēnum	
n-declension				
	fem.	M. Eng.		
Sing. Nom.	tunge	(tunge)		
Gen.	tungan	(tunges)		
Dat.	tungan			
Acc.	tungan			
Pl. Nom. Acc.	tungan	(tunges)		
Gen.	tungena			
Dat.	tungum			

§15. The **nominative case** in nouns in Chaucer ends in **-e**, of such nouns as in Anglo-Saxon were

(a) Of the **n-** declension, masculine, feminine, and neuter. Ex. **drope** (AS m. *dropa*), **harpe** (AS f. *hearpe*), **ere** (AS n. *ēare*).

(b) Masculine and neuter nouns of the vowel-stem declensions, which ended in AS in a final vowel. Ex. **ende** (AS m. *ende*), **spere** (AS n. *spere*).

(c) Feminine nouns of the vowel-stem declensions that ended in **-u** in the nominative, in Anglo-Saxon. Ex. **care** (AS f. *caru*), **dore** (AS f. *duru*), **lawe** (AS f. *lagu*).

(d) Monosyllabic feminine nouns with a long stem-syllable. The **-e** here in oblique cases influenced the nominative. Ex. **bote** (AS f. *bōt*), **cheste** (AS f. *cest*), **halle** (AS f. *heall*).

Certain very common words are exceptions to this. Ex. **ok**, **plyt**, **sped**, **thryft**, **wight**, **won**, **world**, **bench**, **bok**, **hond**, **nicht**, **nyght**.

(e) Nouns of the gerund form, in **-ing**, **-inge**, **-yng**, **-ynge**. Not the present participle.

(f) Nouns, ending in **-en** in Anglo-Saxon, apocopate to **-e**. Ex. **eve** (AS n. *ǣfen*), **game** (AS n. *gamen*), **mayde** (AS n. *mægden*).

(g) Some masculine and neuter nouns end in **-e**, which in AS ended in a consonant in the nominative. Ex. **botme** (AS *botm*), **cloude** (AS *clūd*), **dethe** (AS *dēap*), **welkne** (AS *wolcen*).

(h) The "petrified" dative. Some familiar phrases, containing in AS a preposition with the dative case, remain in Chaucer. Ex. **to borwe**, **on horse**, **to bedde**.

(i) Some nouns of uncertain derivation end in **-e**. Ex. **drede** (AS verb *drædan*), **hye** (AS verb *hīgian*).

§16. Nouns which in Old French end in **-e**, retain the **-e** in Chaucer. Ex. **fortune**, **aventure**.

§17. **Genitive**. The genitive singular of nouns ends in **-es** in Chaucer. Certain nouns are exceptions to this rule, being usually old genitival forms. Ex. **his lady grace**, **his herte blood**, **his fader wil**.

Proper nouns in **-s** often have a genitive identical with the nominative. Ex. **That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye**.

§18. **Plurals**. The plural of nouns ends regularly in **-es**, or (if the nominative ends in **-e**) in **-s**.

Words in **-aunt, -ent, -ioun, -ion, -r, -en, -on, -an**, usually take **-s, -z**. Ex. **servauntz, payementz, prisouns**.

Certain other exceptions to the **-s** plural should be noted.

- (a) **asshen, ben, eyen, foon, shoon**.
- (b) **brethren, doughtren, sustren, children, hosen**.
- (c) **feet, men, wommen**.
- (d) (Plural identical with singular) **wyntir, yer, nyght, folk, thyng**.

§19. **Genitive Plural**. Except in a few cases, as in **nonne preest**, the genitive plural is identical with the nominative.

The old dative plural exists only in particles such as **whilom, a thousand sithe** (AS **sithum**), **fote** (AS **fotum**).

§20. Adjectives.

(a) Anglo-Saxon adjectives, ending in **-e** or **-a** in the strong form, end in **-e** in Chaucer. Ex. **blithe** (AS **blīþe**), **clene** (AS **clāne**), **grene** (AS **grēne**); **lyte, muche**, from AS **lȳt, lȳtel, micel, mycel**, retain the **-e**.

(b) Some adjectives, probably in the petrified vocative, or in a weak use as a well-known epithet, take **-e** in Chaucer. Ex. **hye God, goode fayre Whyt, longe while** (perhaps from AS acc. of time).

(c) Some adjectives of Germanic origin other than Anglo-Saxon, take **-e**. Ex. **badde, lowe, meke, shene, wykke**.

(d) Romance adjectives preserve their **-e** in Chaucer. Ex. **huge, nice, straunge**.

(e) Some Romance adjectives get **-e** in Chaucer, perhaps from the influence of the feminine ending. Ex. **comune**.

Some Romance adjectives preserve their French endings: **o bele nece, egles tercels**.

(f) All weak or definite adjectives end in **-e**. Exceptions occur, **his good wil, the first day of the yere**.

(g) Vocative adjectives before the noun are in the weak form, with **-e**. **O harde grace**.

(h) Dissyllabic and trisyllabic adjectives, accented on the penult, keep or drop **-e** in the weak form, to suit the metrical needs, according to the position of the accent of the following word. Ex. **this woful day, the grettest joy, his excellent nature, the wofulleste wight**.

(i) Monosyllabic plural adjectives end in **-e**. Ex. **dede men**.

In the predicate position this **-e** is sometimes lost. Ex. **Ye be so wys**.

(j) Plural polysyllabic adjectives do not take **-e**, except rarely for metrical needs.

(k) Adjectives end as now in **-er**, **-est** in the comparative and superlative.

§21. Pronouns.

Nominative.	Possessive	Accusative.
I, y, ich, ik	my, myn	me
thou, thow	thy, thyn	the, thee
he	his, hise	hym, him
she, sche, scho	hire, hir (mon. syll.)	hire, here (mon. syll.)
it, hit	his	it, hit
we	our, oure	us
ye	your, youre	yow, you
they, thei	hire, here	hem, them
	ther, their	

Absolute or Attributive.

myn

thyn (thow is often attached to verbs, as sekestow?)

his

hires (usually monosyllabic)

hire

oures, oure

youres, youre

hires, theires

§22. Relative pronouns appear as in modern English.

(a) **Which** often appears with conjunctive **that**; which that, the which that. **Swych** appears along with **such**; pl. **aldre**, in compounds like **alderbest**, **alderlest**, **aldermost**, **alderbothe**, **men (me)**, **noon**, **nought**, etc.

(b) **Al**. **Alle** in the singular is often found, alongside **al**; plural regularly **alle**. Genitive plural (AS **ealra**), **alder**, **aldre**, in compounds like **alderbest**, **alderlest**, **aldermost**, **alderlevest**.

(c) **Reflexive** forms in **-en** occur regularly, as **myselven**, **hemselven**, etc.

(d) **Demonstratives**.

that, pl. tho.

thilke, pl. thilke (that ilke).

this, pl. this, thise, these (monosyllabic).

this ilke.

that oon, that other, by corruption the toon, the tother.

(e) **Interrogatives.** Who, whos, whom, ho, hos, hom, what, which (often used for our **what**). What often equals why. What shulde he fasten?

§23. Adverbs.

(a) The Anglo-Saxon ending of adverbs in **-e** is preserved. Ex. **bryghte, softe.**

Ryght and **lyk**, really conjunctives, are exceptions.

(b) Adverbs end also in **-ly, -lich, -liche** (the latter endings rare before consonants). Ex. **Softeliche he cam. They ronnen hastifliche.**

(c) Adverbs are compared as in modern English. Observe the forms **bet, wors, mo, ner, more, lasse, derre, ferther, ferre, gladlyer, best, mest.**

(d) Some adverbial particles end in **-es** in Chaucer, either from the AS ending, or by analogy. Ex. **algates** (ONorse *alle gotu*), **amonges** (AS *onmang*), **ageynes** (AS *ongægnes*), **elles, ellis** (AS *elles*), **hennes** (AS *heonan, hionan*). So **ones, thennes, thries, togederes, towardses, twyes, unnethes, whennes.**

§24. **The Verb.** In Chaucer, as in Anglo-Saxon, the verbs are divided into the strong and weak conjugations. The strong verbs form the preterite and other past forms by means of ablaut, or vowel-gradation of the verb stem-vowel; the weak verbs for the past add **-de, -te**, for the past participle **-ed**.

§25. **Strong Verbs.** Including the verbs which at an earlier stage of the language employed reduplication, the strong verbs appear in seven classes; that is, the vowel-gradations in the stems appear in seven combinations.

Strong Verbs, vowel-gradation in Anglo-Saxon.

Stem I.	Stem II.	Stem III.	Stem IV.
		2 pret. sing.,	
All forms of present.	1 and 3 pret. sing.	pret. pl. and subj.	Past part.
1. ī bīdan (bide)	ā bād	ī bidon	ī biden
2. ēo bēodan	ēa bēad	u budon	o boden
3. i, e bindan	a band	u bundon	u, o bunden
4. e, beran	æ bær	æ bæron	o boren
5. e metan	æ mæt	æ mæton	e meten
6. a faran	ō fōr	ō fōron	a faren, færen

Class seven will be considered separately.

§26. Mood and tense-endings being alike for all strong verbs, a single paradigm of Anglo-Saxon *rīsan* is given with the Middle English corresponding form in parenthesis.

Present		Indicative.	Subjunctive.	
Sing.	1	<i>rīse</i> (<i>rise</i>)	<i>rīse</i> (<i>rise</i>)	
	2	[<i>rīsest</i>] <i>rīst</i> (<i>rist, risest</i>)	<i>rīse</i> (<i>rise</i>)	
	3	[<i>rīseþ</i>] <i>rīst</i> (<i>rist, riseth</i>)	<i>rīse</i> (<i>rise</i>)	
Plur.	1	} <i>rīsaþ</i> (<i>riseth, risen, rise, rises</i>)	<i>rīsen</i> (<i>risen, -e</i>)	
	2			
	3			
		Imperative.	Infinitive.	Participle.
Sing.	1		<i>rīsan</i> (<i>risen</i>)	<i>rīsende</i> (<i>risyng,</i>
	2	<i>rīs</i> (<i>rise</i>)		<i>risynge</i>)
	3			
Plur.	1	} <i>rīsaþ</i> (<i>riseth, rise</i>)		
	2			
	3			
Preterite		Indicative.	Subjunctive.	Past Participle.
Sing.	1	<i>rās</i> (<i>roos</i>)	<i>rīse</i> (<i>rise</i>)	<i>rīsen</i> (<i>risen</i>)
	2	<i>rīse</i> (<i>rise</i>)		
	3	<i>rās</i> (<i>roos</i>)		
Plur.	1	} <i>rīson</i> (<i>risen</i>)	<i>rīsen</i> (<i>risen</i>)	
	2			
	3			

§27. Notes on the forms in Chaucer.

(a) Present. The first person singular regularly ends in *-e*, but sometimes this *-e* is not sounded in the commonest verbs.

The second person singular, by syncopation, often contracts to *-st*. *Thow farst, thow wenst*.

The third person singular regularly ended in *-eth*, as in the paradigm. Frequently this appears as *-th* only, as in *comth*, *goth*, etc. Even where the full *-eth* is written, it is sometimes not sounded as a syllable. Verbs with stems ending in *-t*, *-d*, *-s*, as *riden*, *writen*, sometimes contract to *-t*. So *rit*, *stant*, *writ*.

The modern form (a northern dialect form in Chaucer's day) sometimes appears; *he dwelles*.

The plural ending is regularly *-en*; sometimes occur the variants *-eth*, *-es*.

(b) Preterite. Noteworthy is the second person singular form in **-e**; **rise**. The modern form in **-est** belongs generally in weak verbs after **-ed**.

§28. List of Strong Verbs.

Class I.

AS	ī	ā	i	i
Chaucer	i	o	i	i
	shinen	shoon	shinen	shinen

Verbs: **shyne**, **dryve**, **ryve**, **shryve**, **thryve**, **byte**, **slyte**, **smyte**, **wryte**, **byde**, **glyde**, **ryde**, **slyde**, **bistryde**, **wrythe**, **agryse**, **ryse**, **wrye**, **stryve** (added from Old French).

Class II.

AS	ēo	ēa	u	o
Chaucer	e, u	e	o	o

Verbs: **creepe**, **cleeve**, **brewe**, **fleete**, **sheete**, **beede**, **seethe**, **cheese**, **leese** (with wk. pret. **loste** also), **flye**, **lye**, **flee** (also with weak pret. **fledde**), **brouke**, **louke**.

Class III.

AS	i, e	a	u	u, o
Chaucer	i, e	o, a	ou, o	ou, o

Verbs: **swelle**, **helpe**, **yelp**, **delve**, **yeelde**, **worthe**, **kerve**, **sterve**, **breste**, **thresshe**, **fighte**, **swimme**, **clymbe**, **beginne**, **blinne** (**brenne**), (**renne**), **spinne**, **winne**, **bynde**, **fynde**, **grynde**, **wynde**, **ringe**, **singe**, **springe**, **stinge**, **thringe**, **wringe**, **drinke**, **sinke**, **stinke**, **swinke**.

Brenne, **renne** are forms from Old Norse. **Brenne** is inflected in the weak conjugation.

Class IV.

AS	e	æ	ǣ	o
Chaucer	e	a	e, e	o

Verbs: **stele**, **bere**, **shere**, **tere**, **come**, **nime**, **trede**, **breke**, **speke**, **wreke**. **Come**, **nome** form sing. pret. in **o**; **com**, **nom**.

Class V.

AS	e	æ	ǣ	e
Chaucer	e, i	a, e	e	e, i

Verbs: **yive**, **weve**, **ete**, **mete**, **gete**, **quethe**, **see**, **sitte**, **bidde**, **lye** (lie down), **weve**, pp. **woven**; **ete**, pt. **eet**; (**quethe**), pt. **quoth**, **quod**; **see**, pt. **saugh**; **sy**, pp. **seyen**, **sene**, **yseene**.

Class VI.

AS	a	ō	ō	a
Chaucer	a, a, e	o	o	a, a, e, o

Verbs: **fare** (pt. **ferde** < AS **feran**), **swere** (pp. **sworen**), **shape**, **stape**, **grave**, **shave**, **heve** (pt. **haf**), **drawe**, **gnawe**, **stonde** (**stande**), (pp. **stonden**), **bake**, **forsake**, **shake**, **take** (from Old Norse), **wake**, **laughe**, **slee** (pt. **slough**, **slow**; pp. **slawen**, **slayn**), **waxe**, **wexe** (pt. **weex**, **wex**, **wax**; pp. **woxen**), **wasshe** (pt. **wessh**).

Class VII.

Verbs which in early Germanic languages, e.g., Gothic, reduplicated the stem in the preterite, are called reduplicating verbs. Ex. Gothic **haihald** (**held**).

AS	a (or other vowel)	e, eo	a, etc.
Chaucer	a, etc.	e,	a, etc. (same vowel as in
	falle	fell	fallen present stem).
	walke	welk	walken

Verbs: **falle**, **holde**, **wolde**, **walke** (also with **wk.** pret. **walkede**), **fonge**, **honge**, **hote**, **blowe**, **knowe**, **crowe**, **sowe**, **throwe**, **sleepe** (also **wk.** pret. **slepte**), **wepe** (**wk.** pret. also **wepete**), **lete** (pp. often **laten**), **drede**, **rede**, **lepe** (also **wk.** pret. **lepte**), **hewe**, **bete**, **growse**.

§29. **Weak Verbs.** Three classes of weak verbs existed in Anglo-Saxon. Note that in these the preterite plural is from the same stem as the singular.

Class I.

AS	Chaucer	AS	Chaucer
herian	herien	pret. herede	herede
dēman	demen	dēmdē	demde
bycgan	byen	bohte	bouhte

AS	Chaucer
pp. gehered	yhered hered
gedēmed	ydemed demed
geboht	ybouht bouht

In **herian** the ending is **-ian**. In many Chaucerian verbs the **-i** disappears. Ex. **derian**, Ch. **dere**.

In **deman**, the **-ede** of the preterite appears as **-de**.

In *bycgan*, the stem-vowel changes. Ex. *selle*, *solde*; *telle*, *tolde*; *wirchen*, *worhte*. Changes also occur in *recche*, *strecche*, *teche*, *byen*, *thenken*, *bringe*, *wirchen*, *seche*, *seke*.

Class II.

AS	<i>lufian</i>	<i>lufode</i>	<i>gelufod</i>
Chaucer	<i>love</i>	<i>lovede</i>	<i>loved</i>

Class III.

AS	<i>libban</i>	<i>lifde</i>	<i>gelifd</i>
Chaucer	<i>live</i>	<i>livede</i>	<i>ylived, lived</i>

§30. Inflections of weak verb.

	AS	Ch.
Pres. Sing. 1	<i>dēme</i>	<i>deme</i>
2	<i>dēmest</i>	<i>demest, demst</i>
3	<i>dēmeþ</i>	<i>demeth</i>
Plur.	<i>dēmaþ</i>	<i>demeth, demen</i>

Subj. sing. *dēme*; pl. *demen*.

Imper. *deme* (AS and Ch.); pl. *demaþ*, Ch. *demeth*.

Infinitive *dēman*, Ch. *demen*.

Participle *dēmende*, Ch. *demyng*.

	AS	Ch.
Pret. Sing. 1	<i>dēmde</i>	<i>demde, demede</i>
2	<i>dēmdest</i>	<i>demdest</i>
3	<i>dēmde</i>	<i>demde</i>
Plur.	<i>dēmdon</i>	<i>demden, demeden</i>

Subj. sing. *dēmde*, pl. *demden*.

(AS and Ch.)

Past participle *gedēmed*, Ch. *ydemed, demed*.

In Chaucer, usually, the syncopated forms in *-de* are preferred to the full forms in *-ede*. Ex. *felte* for *felede*. Verbs in *-ede*, as *demede*, *semede*, are the exception rather than the rule in the weak preterites.

§31. **Preterite-present class.** A few verbs in Anglo-Saxon, originally perfects, came to acquire a present meaning. In some cases it is easy to see how this happened, since *wāt*, **I know**, implies I have seen, or have learned. In the present these verbs belong to the strong conjugation, except for the

second person singular, which belongs to the singular stem, and adds **-t**. These verbs added a new weak preterite, an infinitive, present participle, and in a few verbs a strong past participle.

I Class of strong verbs. AS **wāt**, Chaucer **wot**.

III Class, AS **can**, **þearf**, **dear**, Chaucer **can**, **dar**, **thar**.

IV Class, AS **sceal**, Chaucer **shal**.

V Class, AS **mæg**, Chaucer **may**.

VI Class, AS **mōt**, Chaucer **mot**.

VII Class, AS **āg**, **āh**, Chaucer **owe**.

§32. The inflections of these verbs in Chaucer follows.

Inf.	Present.			
	sing. 1, 3	sing. 2	pl.	subj.
witen	wot, woot	wost	wite, wote	
konne	kan	kanst	konne	konne
				kan
(durre)	dar	darst	dar	dare
	thar (impers. w. acc.)			
	hym thar			
	shal	shalt	shal, shul	shul
mowen	may	mayst	may, mowe	may, mowe
	mot, moot	most	mote, moten	mote
owen	him oweth		owen	

Preterite.				
sing. 1, 3	sing. 2	pl.	subj.	pp.
wiste	wistest	wiste	wiste	wist
koude, kowde	koudest	koude	koude	kouth
kouthe			koude	
dorste	dordest	dorste		
thurfte				
sholde, shulde	sholdest	sholde(n)		
myghte	myghtest	myghten	myghte	
moste, must(e)		mosten	most, moste	
oghte, oughte	oughtest	oughten		owed
(usually impers. with all numbers and persons)				

§33. Special Verbs. *Be, wil, don, gon, and have.*

Pres. Sing.	1	am	wil, wyl	
	2	art, artow	wilt, wylt	
	3	is	wil	
Pl.		be, ben	wol, wole	
Subj. Pres.		be, pl. be, ben	wol	
			wole	
Pret. Sing.	1	was	wolde	
	2	were	woldest	
	3	was	wolde	
Pl.		were	wolde, wolden	
Pret. Subj.		were	wolde	
			wolde, wolden	
Imperative		be		
		beth		
Pres. part.		beyng		
Past. part.		ben		
Infinitive		be, ben		
Pres. Sing.	1	do	go	have
	2	dost	goost	hast
	3	doth	goth	hath
Pl.		don	gon	han
Subj. Pres.		do	go	have
		do, don	go, gon	
Pret. Sing.	1	dide, dyde dede		hadde
	2	didest, dedest		haddest
	3	dide, etc.		hadde
Pl.		diden		hadde
Pret. Subj.		dide, dede		hadden
		dede, deden		
Imperative		do		have
		doth		haveth, hath
Pres. part.		doyng	goyng	havyng
Past. part.		idon, ydon, don	go, goon	ihad, had
Infinitive		do, don	gon	have, ha

III. Notes on Special Usages.

§34. **Nouns.** Certain expressions, which we should call adverbial, preserve old uses of the oblique cases. The genitive is found in **his thonkes** (thanks to his own efforts), the old dative form in time constructions, **his lyve** (during all his

life), and the accusative of time is more common than now; **this yere, this pestilence.**

§35. **Adjectives.** The substantival use is common; **this goodly fre** (lady understood); **chaunge for no newe**; **the grete** (greater part). For the usage of such forms as **oon**, **oonly**, see the Glossary.

§36. **Prepositions.** Many verbs in Chaucer take prepositions in uses which are now obsolete. Cf. **on reste, on eve, of a purpos.** Some prepositions, which now appear at the clause-end, follow the verb; **to hele with your hurtes.** Others sometimes follow their object; **wente hir fro.** The constructions **to wedde** (for a pledge), **to wyve**, etc., represent an old dative construction. The preposition **with** is almost imprecatory; **with sory grace!** ("bad luck to him").

§37. **Adverbs.** An important difference between Chaucer's use of adverbs and ours lies in the repetition of a negative idea for emphasis where to us it appears redundant or, according to some, contradictory.

**He never yet no vileynye ne sayde
In al his lyf, unto no maner wyght.
She nas hir doghter nat.**

Conjunctions. The conjunction **as** appears in poetry in innumerable cases where it is untranslatable, with a vague enclitic and expletive force, slightly restrictive usually, meaning "considering," "that is to say."

**And borne hym wel, as of so lytel space
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.**

§38. **Pronouns.** A verb may agree with the pronoun in apposition; **hit am I.**

The greater use of the impersonal verbs causes greater use of the dative (objective) forms of the pronouns. **Wel was him, us lyketh, hem thynketh wel.** **What nedeth yow?** Similar constructions employed the reflexive forms frequently. **Thou** is used in familiar, hostile, or in prayerful discourse; **ye** is used for the singular second person in forms of courtesy. Where no especial person is addressed the singular may be found; **Ther maystow seen devysyng of herneys.** The distinction is clear, if we compare the respectful address of the captured Cok to the Fox, CT. B 4595 (**ye**) with his scornful words upon escape immediately thereafter

(thou, thow, thy). He sometimes appears as Lat. *ille*; he **Jakke Straw** ("The famous JS.").

§39. **Verbs.** The subjunctive was very common in Chaucer's day, and was used not merely for conditional clauses, but almost all other subordinate relations, as time, concession, desire, and command. **I deme anon this clerk his servaunt have.**

Intransitive verbs frequently used a perfect form with the verb **be** instead of the simple past, or the perfect with **have**. **This Piramus is come.** This usage is most common with verbs of motion. Compare the modern "Is he gone?"

The perfect participle in the predicate after **do**, **make**, is seen in such constructions as **Thise merchauntz han doon fraught hir shippis.** Compare also **He leet do make a temple.**

IV. Meter.

§40. Chaucer employed, except in a few specimens, the eight-syllable or ten-syllable iambic line. The former he employed almost exclusively in the short couplet, the latter in the heroic couplet or in ballade. Ballade, sometimes called also ballade royal or rime royal, is so named from its use in the French *balades*. These had stanzas of seven or eight lines. The rime-scheme of the former was ababbcc, of the latter ababbcbc. The typical ballade had three stanzas with common rimes and refrain and an *envoy* of five or six lines.

§41. Description of the other types of verse, since the specimens are so few, is not needed here. The reader will not fail to observe the tail-rime stanzas of *Sir Thopas*, and the fantastic strophes of the *Anclida*, as well as the *terza rima* of the *Complaint*, and the roundels of *Merciles Beaute*.

§42. The attempt has been made to consider Chaucer's line apart from the use of other poets, and to enter into much detail on the peculiar usages of his verse. When all has been said, however, it remains true that but a single form of his usage is rare among English poets. This is the nine-syllable line; **Gynglyng in a whistlyng wynde as clere.** Where, elsewhere, there appear a wrong number of syllables in the line, the reader will find that by applying the practices of other poets, or in the apocope, syncope, or elision of final weak **-e**, the apparent difficulty will disappear. Particularly at the *cæsura* this treatment of **-e** will dispose of most of the cases

known as the extra-syllable. Final -e at the end of the line, of course, counts as in Dante's verse as a feminine ending.

V. Chaucer's Life.

§43. Chaucer's life was spent in service at court. Recent study has proved that the facts we possess concerning his life—chiefly records of payment—show only that his service was faithful and well rewarded; that he rose steadily in fortune and regard; and that he died a prosperous, successful man. His career in the royal household was like that of others in similar positions. Nothing in the long list of entries in the records of his life is out of the ordinary life of the court-attendant; nor is it established that Chaucer's literary genius furthered his worldly welfare. Shakespeare's success as actor and manager, and our meager information about his literary life, are curiously paralleled by what we know of the career of our greatest English mediæval poet.

§44. **Birth and Death.** The dates of Chaucer's birth and death are uncertain. The years 1340-1344 may be given as limits for the former, however. October 25, 1400, is the traditional date of his death. The year is almost certainly correct. He was buried in Westminster Abbey; and around his tomb sprang up, long afterwards, the famous Poets' Corner.

§45. **Parentage.** John Chaucer, Geoffrey Chaucer's father, was a London wine-merchant. He owned a brew-house, shops, etc., without Aldgate. His family may have been originally of Norfolk stock. Following what seems to have been a practice of prosperous merchants, he was able to obtain for his son a position as page in a royal household. Doubtless his personal services to Edward III, of which there is some record, gained him this favor.

§46. **Early Life.** We know nothing of Chaucer's education. His name first appears May 20, 1357, in the household accounts of Elizabeth, Countess of Clarence, whose husband, Lionel, was a younger son of the king. In 1359, while in France during the invasion of that country, Chaucer was one of her household to be ransomed from captivity. Of his capture we know nothing. In 1360, still in service with the Countess or Duke Lionel, he was a bearer of messages between the young commander at Calais and his father, Edward III, in London. His further promotion was due, no doubt, to well-earned popularity. A pleasant passage in *The*

Knyghtes Tale (A 1426-40) offers an interesting parallel, all the more valuable because the source of the poem, Boccaccio's *Teseide*, contains no hint of these lines. They may well be taken as a reminiscence of Chaucer's early days at court.

A yeer or two he was in this servyse
 Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte;
 And Philostrate he seyde that he highte.
 But half so wel biloved a man as he
 Ne was ther nevere in court, of his degree;
 He was so gentil of condicioun
 That thurghout al the court was his renoun.
 They seyden, that it were a charitee,
 That Theseus wolde enhaunsen his degree,
 And putten hym in worshipful servyse
 Ther as he myghte his vertu exercise.
 And thus withinne a while his name is spronge
 Bothe of hise dedes and his goode tonge,
 That Theseus hath taken hym so neer
 That of his chambre he made hym a Squier,
 And gaf hym gold to mayntene his degree.

§47. **Missions in the King's Service.** In 1367, when Chaucer's name next appears, we find him newly established in the king's own household; a promotion which appears natural and not uncommon. His title was at first "vallettus," afterwards "esquier" (or in Latin "scutifer" and "armiger"). The class of squires to which Chaucer belonged can best be compared to secretaries, in our day and land. They acted for the king in the purchase of supplies, in managing the household, and in bearing messages of importance. Often during the wars they served abroad in the army. Thus in 1369 Chaucer was in France, with many others of the king's household. Other particular services, with dates, follow.

1370. Dispatches to France.

1372-1373. Secret service to Italy (Genoa and Florence), probably in connection with trade alliances.

1376. Secret service abroad, with Sir John de Burley, who had been Captain of Calais.

1377. Missions to Flanders and France, on a secret treaty with France. In these Chaucer was a subordinate, but apparently a trusted one.

1378. Missions for the young king, Richard II, who had succeeded his grandfather, Edward III, in 1377, to France and to Lombardy. The latter embassy was sent to Barnabo Visconti, Lord of Milan, for assistance in his wars.

§48. **Rewards.** The squires of the King's household received a regular wage, sevenpence halfpenny a day. In addition, however, they were given such benefits as it was in the King's power to grant, such as annuities, grants of land, grants of office, the custody of lands belonging to heirs under age, and other valuable favors. Chaucer's rewards were apparently like those of other squires, some of whom received more, some less. His rewards follow.

1367. Yearly pension of 20 marks (£13 6s. 8d.).

1374. Pitcher of wine daily, from the king.

1374. Controllershship of Customs and Subsidy of Wools, skins, and leather for the Port of London. This was ended in 1386.

1375. Custody of lands and person of Edmund Staplegate, of Kent.

1376. Grant of fine paid by John Kent for smuggling.

1382. Controllershship of Petty Customs, Port of London. This was ended in 1386.

1385. Justice of the Peace for Kent.

1386. Knight of the Shire for Kent, and thus a member of Parliament.

1389. Clerk of the King's Works at Westminster.

1390. Clerk of the King's Works at Windsor. These offices probably involved superintendency of repairs and alterations.

1390. Commission to repair the banks of the Thames between Woolwich and Greenwich. In this year Chaucer erected the royal scaffolds—grandstands—for a tournament in Smithfield. He was also appointed joint forester of North Petherton Park.

1394. Grant of £20 annually for life.

1398. Sole Forester of North Petherton Park.

1399. Henry IV, crowned September, 1399, granted Chaucer 40 marks (£26 13s. 4d.) annuity, in addition to the £20 annuity, which was confirmed.

All these rewards Chaucer owed, officially at least, directly to the King. His loss of the customs positions in 1386 may have been merely a resignation, and cannot be held to argue loss of fortune or royal favor. No doubt, in his twelve years of office, Chaucer's shrewdness and ability to deal with all sorts of people had brought him a considerable fortune. He must have become a landholder of some consequence in Kent to have been appointed Justice of the Peace for that shire. To the end of

his life, so far as we have any right to judge, Chaucer appears to have steadily advanced in purse and reputation; and although a few records show Chaucer borrowing money, or sued for debt, yet he was probably no more hard pressed for that commodity than the King's exchequer.

§49. **Marriage, and Life in London and Greenwich.** Squires of the royal household, as was natural, often married ladies-in-waiting. Probably before 1366, Chaucer married Philippa, generally believed to be Philippa Roet, Lady of the Chamber to Queen Philippa. She was the sister of Catherine Swynford, mistress and afterwards wife of John of Gaunt, of whose infant children she had been governess. In 1372 Philippa received a small grant from John of Gaunt, and in 1374, with her husband, a further grant of £10 yearly. In the latter grant Chaucer's services to the Duke are also referred to, but it is likely that the whole grant was intended for the service of Philippa. Chaucer had written *The Boke of the Duchesse* in 1366 as a memorial of John of Gaunt's first wife, but the poem does not appear to have brought any immediate reward; nor does the traditional theory of John of Gaunt's patronage of Chaucer have any strong foundation. Still, in 1386, the Duke was present at a ceremony in Lincoln, when Philippa was admitted as a lay-member of the Cathedral body.

Chaucer lived in 1374 in the dwelling-house above the gate of Aldgate. About 1386 he went to live in Greenwich; and shortly before the end of his life he leased a residence at Westminster.

Of his married life we know nothing; less even than of Shakespeare's. His wife died about 1387. Thomas Chaucer, whose relationship to the poet is almost beyond dispute, appears to have been the only child to gain distinction. He was chief butler to Richard II, before Geoffrey died. A "litel sone Lowis," for whom Chaucer prepared his *Astrolabe*, is not mentioned elsewhere.

Cecilia Chaumpaigne, in 1380, released Chaucer from all liability "de raptu meo." The exact nature of the charge we have no means of knowing; it is likely that it was merely a civil suit, and that Chaucer was only one of a number involved. In September, 1390, Chaucer was robbed twice, near the Foul Oak in Kent, while traveling on business of his office, and some of the King's money was taken from him.

§50. **Chaucer's Friends.** With his excellent opportunities and the amiable character which we observe in his writings, it would have been strange if Chaucer had not had a wide circle of friends. As a member of the King's household he doubtless felt it wrong to mix in the politics of the great lords, or the religious or social quarrels of his time. His associates, at any rate, are drawn from both of the chief conflicting parties. John Gower, the poet, author of *Confessio Amantis*, was an unsparing critic of Richard II and of the clergy. Chaucer dedicated his *Troilus* to him and to Ralph Strode, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and an opponent of Wycliffe. Chaucer also left Gower as his attorney upon his departure for France in 1378. Henry Scogan, to whom Chaucer addressed an *Envoy*, was tutor to King Henry IV's sons, and had previously been in Richard's service. Otes de Graunson, from whose French verses Chaucer translated his *Compleynt of Venus*, was a knight of Savoy in the service of John of Gaunt. Robert de Bukton, to whom (probably) Chaucer addressed an *Envoy*, was a squire of Queen Anne's household, in Richard II's court. Eustache Deschamps, a contemporary poet of France, who served, like Chaucer, at his King's court, sent to his English rival in poetry a copy of his poems, with a ballade addressed to the "Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier." Deschamps' poems had great influence upon Chaucer. Deschamps' friend, Lewis Clifford, who bore the poems to England, was an opponent of John of Gaunt, but with Lollard leanings.

Other prominent men with whom Chaucer had relations were Lord William de Beauchamp, a son of the Earl of Warwick, and Thomas de Percy, a brother of the Earl of Northumberland.

Of Chaucer's acquaintance in Italy we know nothing. He may have met Boccaccio and Petrarch, or he may not. At all events, he had time in a four-months' stay to make some Italian friendships.

VI. Dates of Chaucer's Works.

§51. None of Chaucer's writings is definitely dated. All depend upon more or less uncertain inferences from style, source, or allusions to contemporary events. It is a curious fact, that while the poet tells Scogan that while he was young, he put his pen "forth in press," yet only one poem, the *Boke of the*

Duchesse, can be dated with certainty before his thirty-fifth year, and most of his extant work lies between the years of forty-five and sixty. Much, evidently, has been lost.

1369-1370. *Boke of the Duchesse*. Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster, died in the autumn of 1369.

1377-1381. Translation of *Boethius*.

1381. *Parlement of Foules*, celebrating the betrothal of Richard II and Anne of Bohemia, in 1381.

1380-1385. *Troilus and Criseyde*.

1386-1387. *Legend of Good Women*. Second Prologue (A-version) somewhat later (1394-95, according to Tatlock).

1391-1392. *Treatise on the Astrolabe*.

1387-1400. *The Canterbury Tales*. Of these the *Knights Tale* (under the name of *Palemon and Arcite*), the *Lyf of Seynt Cecilie*, and perhaps other parts, were written earlier. The invocation in *St. Cecilie* has been placed at 1385, the rest of the *Seconde Nonnes Tale* earlier.

1396. *Envoy to Bukton*. If addressed to Robert Bukton, as is probable, then just at his marriage before January, 1397.

1399. *Compleynt to his Purse*. Addressed to Henry IV, as "conquerour" of England. Henry was crowned in 1399.

§52. The other works have only vague and general evidence for date. Early work probably includes *Chaucer's A B C*, a translation, *Origenes upon the Maudeleyne*, *Boke of the Leoun* (lost), *Compleynt of Mars*, complaints, roundels, etc. *The Hous of Fame* and *Anelida* have been placed between 1380 and 1385. Late work includes probably a translation of Pope Innocent's *De Contemptu Mundi*, *Fortune*, *Lak of Stedfastnesse*, *Envoy to Scogan*, *Compleynt of Venus* and *The Former Age*. Last of all, according to the sentimental tradition supported by early scribes, came *Trouthe*, "written on his death-bed."

VII. Chaucer's Reading.

§53. Chaucer's works present to us a writer familiar with the best reading accessible in his age. There is little phenomenal or surprising in the great number of authors cited by Chaucer, whose names and works appear in the glossarial-index. Moreover, many of the ancient writers Chaucer knew probably from the excerpts quoted in *Florilegia*, or mediæval encyclopædias. His wide acquaintance with the great French poets of his day was a natural thing, since for centuries French literature had

been a model for English poets. His admiration for Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, however, marks the first influence of Italian literature upon our own.

§54. Two works, the *Roman de la Rose*, of the thirteenth century, and Boethius' treatise *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, of the sixth century, had the strongest hold upon Chaucer's thought and imagination. He published translations of both, and the worldly wisdom of the one and the spiritual wisdom of the other appear upon every page of his writings.

§55. Next to these in influence come Guillaume Machault (fl. 1350), and Eustache Deschamps and Jehan Froissart, whose work was contemporary with his own. Their poems of courtly love, in the fiction of which the poet falls asleep and dreams a love-adventure, had become a definite literary type. Chaucer's own vision-poems, *The Parlement of Foules*, *Boke of the Duchesse*, *Prologue to the Legend of Good Women* and *The Hous of Fame*, were the result of his study of French models. The *Hous of Fame* was perhaps intended to serve as prologue to some collection of tales; but it was never finished.

§56. Of the Italians, Boccaccio was most influential. His *Teseide* is the source of *The Knightes Tale*; his *Filostrato* and *Filocolo* the chief sources of *Troilus and Criseyde*, though Chaucer nowhere acknowledges these debts. Boccaccio's tale of *Griselda*, translated by Petrarch from the *Decameron* into Latin, reached Chaucer in the later form. Other works by him may possibly have influenced the English poet. A sonnet of Petrarch's found its way into some stanzas of the *Troilus*, and some lines from Dante's *Divina Commedia* into the *Invocation* of the *Seconde Nonnes Tale*. It is now thought probable, also, that Chaucer's scheme of the pilgrimage with tales by the pilgrims, was the result of reading similar arrangements of tales by Italian authors, especially the *Novelle* of Giovanni Sercambi (1347-1424).

§57. Of the Latin authors of the classical age—Chaucer, like other mediæval readers, knew no Greek—our poet was acquainted with Virgil, Ovid (the chief source of the *Legend of Good Women*), Livy, Lucan, Claudian, and Maximian. The mediæval encyclopædists, and especially the writers in Latin of the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, furnished him with most of his varied knowledge of medicine, alchemy, precious stones, astronomy, history, biography, morals and religion. *The Tale of the Man of Lawe*, *Melibee* and the *Persones Tale* were versions of narra-

tives from Latin sources. The Church Fathers, especially Augustine and Jerome, were part of the reading of good Christians.

§58. French fabliaux furnished Chaucer with the plots of the tales of the *Miller*, *Reeve*, *Shipman*, *Pardoner*, *Wife of Bath*, *Summoner*, *Merchant* and *Manciple*. A Breton lay, in a French form, may have suggested the *Frankleyns Tale*; and the *Nonne Preestes Tale* of the Cock and Fox was a chapter of the bourgeois mock-heroic epic, *Le Roman de Renart*.

Chaucer's achievement, however, lay not in the introduction of foreign matter and manner into English literature, nor in the number and variety of the books he read, but in his perfect assimilation of their thought, and in the wholly original impress with which every line of his poems is stamped.

VIII. The Human Comedy of the Canterbury Tales.

§59. On the sixteenth of April, 13—, Chaucer and the other twenty-eight pilgrims gathered at the Tabard Inn in Southwark. The next morning they agreed to the Host's proposal of two tales by each pilgrim, both on the outward and the homeward way, the winner to have a dinner as a prize—the best prize of which Mine Host Harry Bailey could dream. At St. Thomas a Waterings the cuts were drawn, and the lot fell upon the knight—not by accident, if we know the admirable Host aright. Precedence at the high table in his inn had taught him somewhat.

At the conclusion of the Knight's tale, Mine Host proceeded as courtesy asked, to invite the Monk to tell his tale. But the rules of courtesy, it seemed, must be laid aside. Drunken Robin, the Miller, has a tale of a carpenter to say, which vexes a little good Oswald the Reeve, and just by Deptford and Greenwich he retorts with the most famous tale of a miller that ever was known. Hodge of Ware, the London Cook, thought so at least, and with a threat of a tale of a landlord ere the pilgrimage were done, began a tale of an apprentice of London. This Chaucer never finished; and so ends all that was planned of the first day's stories (Group A).

About ten o'clock, after leaving Dartford, Mine Host called upon the Man of Lawe. He responded nobly; and the Host would have followed up the godly story with something more of the serious, had not the Parson objected so strenuously to the profanity of landlord Harry. The Shipman rudely broke

in with a ribald narrative, which greatly delighted master Bailey. Nevertheless, pursuing his rule of inviting the better class first, he called upon Madame Eglantine the Prioress. So sober was her tale, that Mine Host, in desperation to relieve the tension, sought out Chaucer, who had been a source of considerable speculation to the worthy student of mankind at inns. A poet came his way but seldom. Alas! the poet played him a scurvy trick with his ryme of Sir Thopas; and Mine Host got such relief that his ears ached. In revenge for being stopped, Chaucer next told a long tale in prose about patience, to the great edification of all. Mine Host wishes his wife might have heard it, for patience had never been her chief virtue. Now all was clear, and with the inevitability which comes to those who deal with ranks and classes, the Host succeeded, as they came in sight of Rochester, in getting Sir Piers the Monk to tell his melancholy long list of "tragedies." At last the pilgrims murmured, and the Knight, speaking for all, ventured to interrupt the Monk. Greatly relieved at this outcome, and grateful that the interruption of a gentle had not been forced upon him, Mine Host turned, after the Monk's rebuff, to Sir John, the Nuns' Priest, and won the crown of the Tales, that of the Cock and Fox. Thus, scarcely outside Rochester, ended the second day (Group B).

Next day, between Rochester and Sittingbourne, came the Physician with his sad story of Virginia, which almost broke Harry Bailey's heart. The jolly Pardoner rescued him with his bold and shameless self-revelation, and, indeed, so deeply impressed the Host a little later with his magnificent sermon against avarice, that for a moment the Pardoner really thought his confession had been forgotten. But Mine Host was not to be caught, and took refuge in abuse. Shortly afterwards, for they were still far from Sittingbourne, the Wife of Bath, Dame Alice, began the immortal discussion of the married state with her statement of her creed. Virginity for others, not for her. She will have a husband, and sovereignty as well. Friar Hubert, who had been somewhat ill at ease under the preachments of one whose sex had furnished the bulk of his own congregations, interrupted once during her recital, and again after her Tale, to the great disgust of the Summoner, his rival in ecclesiastical rascality. High words ensued, and it was not to be wondered at that their tales should have been virulent attacks upon each other, and furnished a highly comic interlude to the rest (Groups C-D).

After luncheon at Sittingbourne, we may imagine the Host turning once more to his beloved gentles for a story-teller. He fixed upon the Clerk of Oxford, who had in silence been ruminating upon the sermon and creed of Dame Alice of Bath. His tale of Griselda, though the point was not at first apparent, was his own grave and yet mocking answer to the philosophy of the Wife. Griselda's patience, however, touched by contrast a very sore spot in the breast of the Merchant, and the Host begged him to continue the discussion. This he did, in the utter discredit and slander of the fair sex. In their defence, Mine Host next called upon the Squire to speak of love, which as yet had scarcely been mentioned. This point Chaucer himself did not finish, for the Squire's tale is left half-told. The Franklin, however, was greatly pleased with the nobility of the young Squire, being all the more reminded of it by the want of gentlemanly breeding in his own son. Upon Mine Host's urging, he concludes the discussion of marriage by a tale in which both love and marriage are exalted, but honour more than all, a most worthy conclusion. Thus the pilgrims reach Osprunge, upon the end of their third day (Groups E-F).

On the fourth day, the Second Nun tells her tale of St. Cecilia, and the pilgrims are overtaken at Boughton by the alchemy-mad Canon and his Yeoman. The Host, ever curious as to the humours of mankind, engages the Yeoman in conversation, and learns more than the Canon cares to have known about his practices. The Canon flees away for very shame, and as they pass Blean Forest the Yeoman tells a tale of trickery in transmutation. Not long afterwards, they come in sight of Bob-up-and-down, or Harbledown, only a couple of miles out of Canterbury, and the drunken Cook falls off his horse. The Manciple mocks him, but retracts upon second thought, and placates the Cook with wine from his own gourd. His Tale of a tattling crow brings the pilgrims into Canterbury, and at its close Mine Host calls upon the Parson to wind all up with a godly discourse. With the Host's excellent injunction to be "fructuous, and that in lytel space," he begins his discourse upon Penitence, and the Comedy of the leisurely Canterbury Pilgrims comes to an end (Groups G-I).

NOTE.—The above summary gives a more complete unity to the groups of extant Tales than perhaps ever really existed. In the *Prologue*, the reader will observe Chaucer planned for two tales each way by each pilgrim, but less than one-fifth were

provided, and the connecting "links" leave nine separate groups of Tales (Groups A-I), the exact order of which is still a disputed matter. The order of the Ellesmere MS., for example, is held by Koch to be best. It arranges the Groups thus: A, B (through *Man of Lawe*), D, E, F, C, (rest of) B, G, H, I.

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Names, and in some cases notes on special words, are included in the following pages. Such etymologies as are needed for proper understanding of the Middle English forms are also included; but the etymologies are not intended to be complete guides to the early history of words, where the development of the form may be easily guessed.

The student should remember the frequent interchange of "a" and "aa," "i" and "y," "e" and "ee," "o" and "oo" in referring to words.

References to the selections are designated as follows: in the order printed,

A, B, C, etc., to I,	refer to the groups of the Canterbury Tales	Ro	To Rosemounde
		Tr	Truth
		Gent	Gentilesse
Pi	Complaint unto Pite	LS	Lak of Stedfastnesse
Du	Book of the Duchesse	Sc	Envoy to Scogan
Cm	Compleint of Mars	Bu	Envoy to Bukton
Pf	Parlement of Foules	CV	Complaint of Venus
L	Legend of Good Women	P	To his Purse
CL	Compleynt to his Lady	Pr	Proverbs
An	Anelida and Arcite	AgW	Against Women Incon-
Ad	Adam Scrivener		stant
Fa	Former Age	Wn	Wommanly Noblesse
Fo	Fortune	As	Astrolabe
MB	Merciless Beaute		

The following are the chief abbreviations used:

a	adjective	refl	reflexive
acc	accusative	s	singular
ad	adverb	saec	century
art	article	sb	substantive
c	<i>circa</i> , about (dates)	Sk	according to W. W. Skeat
cf.	compare	subj	subject
conj	conjunction	suff	suffix
d	died	vb	verb, verbal
dat	dative	<	derived from
f	feminine	1, 2, 3	first, second and third person
gen	genitive		
imp	imperative	AF	Anglo-French
impers	impersonal	Arab	Arabic
inf	infinitive	AS	Anglo-Saxon
interj	interjection	Dan	Danish
m	masculine	Du	Dutch
n	neuter	F	French
p	present participle	Gael	Gaelic
pers	personal	Ger	German
pers	personification	Gr	Greek
pl	plural	Icel	Icelandic
poss	possessive	Lat	Latin
pp	past participle	L Ger	Low German
pr	present	ME	Middle English
prep	preposition	OF	Old French
pron	pronoun	ON	Old Norse
pt	past tense	Sw	Swedish
qv	which see		

A

- a an art. a AS *ān* (n before cons. dropped after 1200)
- a inf. have (through slurring) ME *haveren*, *han*
- a interj. ah! Oh! ME, OF a
- a prep. in, on, for; a certain years] for a space of years; a twenty winter] twenty years; a Goddes half] for God's sake; a wordes few] in. few words; a three] in three; a-nyght] at night; a-morwe] on the morrow; AS on
- abak: backwards AS *onbæc*
- abashat, abashed pp. abashed, disconcerted OF *esbair*, pres. stem *esbaiss-*
- abawed pp. disconcerted OF *ababir* "stammer," influenced by *esbahir*
- abayst pp. abashed, disconcerted; cf. *abashat*
- abesse: abbess F *abbesse*
- abedde: abed AS *on bedde*
- a-begged: a-begging ME *a(on) + beggeth*, analogy with AS *huntað* "hunting"
- abeye inf. pay for AS *ābycgan*
- abhomynable: horrible, vile OF *abominable*
- abhomynacions: abominations OF
- abilite: ability OF
- abode, pt. s. expected; cf. *abyde*
- abood sb. delay vb. sb. from pt. of AS *ābidan*
- aboughte 3 pt. s. bought, atoned for; abought, pp.; aboght pp.; cf. *abye*
- about prep. about; aboute
- aboute ad. around AS *ābūtan*
- aboven: above AS *ābufan*
- Abraham: Hebrew patriarch; cf. Genesis
- a-brayed pt. s. awoke AS *ābregdan*
- abregge inf. abridge OF *abregier*, *abrevier*
- abroche inf. broach, open (a cask) ME *on + OF broche* "spigot"
- abrood: wide open ME *on + AS brād*, ME *brod*
- Absalon: Absalom, son of David, famous for beauty
- absolucioun: absolution OF
- abusioun: illusion OF
- abyden inf. wait for; abyd imp. AS *ābidan*
- abyen inf. pay for, suffer, atone for, abide AS *ābycgan*
- abyte: habit, dress OF *habit*
- a-caterwawed: caterwauling; cf. a-begged ME *on + cat + wawe* "wail"
- accident: the outward appearance or phenomenon of a thing, as opposed to the thing (substance) itself, in allusion to the dispute between Realists and Nominalists (Sk.) C 539; unusual appearance, E 607; OF
- accomplice inf. accomplish OF *accomplir*, pr. part. *accompliss-*
- accord sb. agreement, decision OF *acorde*
- accordant: suitable OF
- accorde 3 pr. pl. agree OF *acorder*
- achaat sb. buying OF
- achatours: purchasing agents OF *achateor*, *achetour*
- Acheloyes gen. Achelous, river-god, took form of a bull in wrestling with Hercules
- Achetofel: Ahithophel, adviser of David, and afterward adviser of Absalom against David; cf. 2 Samuel xvii. Dryden uses the form Achitophel in his Absalom and Achitophel
- Achilles: the greatest warrior among the Greeks at Troy. To avenge the death of his friend Patroclus he slew Hector and dragged his body thrice around the walls of Troy. Later he was lured to the temple of Apollo in Troy by the promise of marriage to Polyxena, daughter of Priam, and was there attacked by Paris and a band of men and slain, together with his friend Archilochus. This story of his death comes from Benoit de Sainte-Maure and Guido delle Colonne
- acloyith: cloys, loads up OF *encloyer*

a-compas: in a circle ME on + F
compas
acordaunt a. in accord with;
acordaunt to resoun] reasonable,
proper OF.
acorde sb. accord; al of oon
acorde] in harmony OF.
acorden 3 pr. pl. agree; acorded
3 pt. s. was fitting; acordeden
3 pt. pl.; acorded pp. OF
acorder
acounte: take count of OF aconter
acquite inf. acquit oneself;
acquitheth 2 pl. imp. OF aquiter
actes pl. deeds OF acte
acusour: informer OF acuseor
acustumaunce: habit OF acous-
tumance
adamant: adamant, fabulous mate-
rial of extreme strength; ada-
mauntis pl. magnets OF.
Adoon: Adonis, Grecian youth be-
loved by Venus A 2224
adoun: down, downwards; adoune:
AS of + dūne dat. dūn "hill,
down"
adrad pp. afraid, fearful AS
ofdrædan
Adriane: Ariadne, beloved of The-
seus and Bacchus
Adromacha: Andromache, wife of
Hector
adversarie: adversary Lat adversa-
rius F adversaire
adversitee, adversyte: misfortune,
adversity OF.
advertence: attention OF.
advocat: advocate; advocatz pl.
(the *t* is mute) OF avocat
a-fer: afar ME on + fer
aferd, afered, aferid pp. afraid
AS āfæran
affeccion of hoolynesse: love for
a divine nature OF affection
affermeth 3 pr. s. affirms; affermed
pp. OF afermer
affile inf. smooth OF afiler
affray, afraye sb. fright, terrōr
OF esfrei
affrayed pp. frightened OF es-
freier
Affrik: Africa
Affrikan, Affrycan: cf. Scipioun
afounde: founder, sink OF afonder

afraye sb. dread; cf. affray
afright pp. frightened AS āfyrht
after prep. to get, for, according
to; after oon] alike, equal AS
æfter
aftir: cf. after
afty as: according as
agame: in sport ME on + game
agaste 3 pt. s. refl. was aghast;
agaste, agast pp. frightened
AS āgæstan
Agaton: Agatho, perhaps an Athe-
nian poet mentioned by Aris-
totle as author of play called
"The Flower" (Cary and Skeat)
agayn, agaynes, agayns ad. again;
prep. against, towards, to meet
AS ongegn, ongēanes
agaynward: back again
agen: again
Agenores poss. Agenor's daughter,
Europa, was carried off by Jupi-
ter, who had taken the form of a
bull
ageyn: again, in reply
ageynist: against, before
agiltyn inf. commit wrong; agilte
3 pt. pl. were at fault AS
āgiltan
ago, agon, agoo, agoon pp. gone
AS āgān "pass away"
a-gref ad. ill ME on + OF grief
agrevd pp. angry OF agrever
agrief: in ill humor
agryse inf. dread, tremble with
fear; agryse of] shudder at C 280;
AS āgrisan
agu: ague OF ague f. of agu
aiel: grandfather OF aiol, aiuel
ake inf. ache; aken 3 pr. pl. AS
acan
aketoun: short stuffed jacket OF
aketon
al a. all; al a] the whole of; al
and sum] the whole; al ad. all,
completely; al be, al conj. al-
though; al redy: all ready AS
eal pl. ealle
al sb. awl, prick AS æl
al utterly: utterly
alabastre: alabaster OF.
alauntz pl. wolf(?) -hounds OF
alan, alant
alayes: alloy OF alei

Alcebiades: Alcibiades, Athenian commander in the Peloponnesian war, famous for his beauty and grace

Alceste: queen of Admetus, king of Thessaly, went to Hades as a substitute for her husband

Alcipyades: cf. Alcebiades

Alcyone: Alcyone, or Halcyone, who for grief at the death of her husband, Ceyx, threw herself into the sea. The gods in pity changed them to birds, kingfishers

alday: continually, all day

alder poss. pl. of all; our alder] of us all AS ealre

alderbeste ad. best of all

alderfayrest: the very fairest

alderfirst: first of all

alderman sb. head of a guild AS ealdorman

Aldiran: Aldiran, a star in Leo

aldirnex: next of all

ale-stake: stake from which hung branch of ivy, etc., the "bush,"

as sign of an ale-house AS ealu n. + staca m.

aleye: alley OF alee

Aleyn: Alain de l'Isle, saec. xii, wrote "De Planctu Naturæ," a treatise in prose and verse, and "Anticlaudianus," defending celi-bacy

Algarsyf: son of Cambynskan

algate, algates, algatis ad. in every way, always, at least, nevertheless, anyhow, no matter how, at any rate ON alla gotu ad. acc.

Algezir: city in Granada, captured from the Moors in 1344

alighte 3 pt. s. dismounted, camped; **alight** pp. AS ālihtan "remove load from"

Alisaundre: Alexandria in Egypt was captured by the King of Cyprus in 1365

Alisaundre, Alysaunder: Alexander the Great

Alisoun: friend of Dame Alice, the Wife of Bath

Alkaron: Al-Koran, the Moslem Bible

all: although

Alla, Alle, Aella: king of Northumberland, 560-567 A. D.

allas interj. alas! OF.

alle pl. al: all; alle and some] one and all

allege inf. allege, put forth as evidence OF esligier "free of legal difficulties"

aller poss. pl. of all; at our aller cost] at the expense of all of us

alliaunce: alliance OF.

allon, allone: alone ME al + on < AS ān, (?)āna

allowethe for allow the 1 pr. s. I commend thee OF alouer

allye, allyee sb. ally; **allices** pl. family connections OF alier "bind"

allyen, allie inf. ally oneself, join with; **allied** pp. OF alier

Alma redemptoris: the first words of several Latin hymns: alma redemptoris mater, benign mother of the Redeemer

Almache: Almachius, "prefect" of Rome

Almageste: the greatest astronomical work of Ptolemy (c. 150 A. D.) < Arab al (the) + mejisti < Gr megistê, greatest

almesse: alms AS ælmyss

almost: almost AS eal + mæst

almoost ad. almost

almusede: the giving of alms AS ælmyss + dæd f.

Alnath: a fixed star in Aries, name of the moon's first mansion

Alocen: Alhazen c. 1000, an Arabian astronomer

alohte: aloft ON ā lopt

als: as AS eal swā

also: as; often used to introduce a wish AS eal swā

altercacioun: dispute OF.

althou: although; cf. althogh

alther-first: first of all; cf. alder-first

althogh, althou, althow: although ME al + AS þeah

alway, alwey: always, continually; AS ealne weg ad. acc.

alyche: alike AS onlic a.

alyght pp. alighted, arrived; cf. alight

alyve: alive AS on lyfe dat.
Amadrides: Hamadryades, wood-
 nymphs
Amazones: Amazons, nation of
 women
ambes as: double aces, lowest
 throw iñ dice OF.
ambil sb. amble, gentle pace OF
 ambler
amblere sb. ambling horse
amblyng: ambling, pacing gently
amenden inf. better, improve;
 amended 3 pt. s.; amendid pp.
 OF amender
ameved 3 pt. s. changed, altered
 OF esmovoir
amonge, amanges ad. all the
 while; **among prep.** AS onmang
amor vincit omnia: Love conquers
 all things
amorous: amorous, loving OF
 amoros
a-morwe: on the morrow
amounteth 3 pr. s. means, amounts
 to OF amonter
Amphiorax: Amphiarus, one of
 the Seven against Thebes, be-
 trayed by Eriphyle, his wife, for
 a necklace
Amphioun: Amphion, king of
 Thebes, the music of whose lyre
 caused stones to form themselves
 into the walls of Thebes
amy: friend OF.
amyable: amiable OF.
amydde, amyddes, amyddis: amid,
 amidst AS on middan (dat. f.
 + -es ad. suff.)
amys: amiss, wrong ON ā mis(?)
 AS missan
an: cf. a
an prep. on AS on
ancre: anchor AS ancor
and conj. and; and if] used with
 conditional force; used as a rela-
 tive B 622 AS and
Anelyda: queen of "Ermonye,"
 Armenia
angle: four houses, or divisions of
 zodiacal circle, were called angles,
 N. E. S. and West; angle merid-
 ional] tenth mansion of the
 heavens (Sk.) OF.

anglehoke: fish-hook, angle + AS
 hōc m.
anglis: angles
angre: anger, trouble ON angr
angwissh: anguish OF anguisse
anhang: hang ME on + AS hōn
 (pp. hangen)
anlaas: knife, dagger ME on +
 OF laz "hanging on cord"
annexe: annex; annexed pp. bound
 to OF annexer
annunciat pp. told of by annun-
 ciation Lat. annunciatu
anon, anone, anoon ad. right away,
 soon; anon ryght] at once AS
 on ān "in one (moment)"
anoy: trouble OF anoi
anoyeth 3 pr. s. turns out ill;
 annoy ye imp. pl OF anoier
answere sb. answer, reply AS
 andswaru f.
answere inf. answer; answerde,
 answered 3 pt. s. AS andswarian
antheme: anthem AS antefen <
 antiphona
Anthenor: Antenor, according to
 Guido's Historia Troiana, be-
 trayed Troy by sending the
 sacred Palladium to Ulysses
Antheus, Antaeus: a giant, strength-
 ened by every contact with earth,
 slain by Hercules, who held him
 over his head B 3298
anthiphoner: antiphonea, hymn-
 book
Antiochus, Anthiochus: Antiochus,
 the great king of Syria, character
 in "Apollonius"
Antonius: Mark Antony
Antylegyus: Archilochus, slain with
 Achilles, q. v.
anvelet: anvil AS anfilte, anfælt n.
anyght: at night
apalled pp. weakened, pallid OF
 apallir
apayd pp. paid, repaid, satisfied
 OF paier
ape sb. ape, dupe AS apa m.
Apelles; cf. Appelles
Apennyn: The Apennines
aperceyve inf. perceive OF aper-
 cevoir
aperceyvynge: perceptions

apere inf. appear OF **aparoir**
pres. stem **aper**
apert: openly
apertenaunt, apertenent, apertinent:
belonging to OF **apartenant**
apertenying: belonging to
apese inf. appease, allay; **apeseth**
imp. pl. OF **apaisier**
apeyren inf. injure OF **empeirier**
apiked pp. trimmed, adorned OF
a + **piquer**
Apius: Appius Claudius, a Roman
judge
apostles poss. pl. apostles'
apothecarie: apothecary OF
apotecaire
appareille sb. and inf. apparel OF
aparailler
apparaillynge: preparation
apparence: appearance illusion
OF.
appeere, apperen inf. appear OF
aparoir
Appelles: Apelles, Grecian painter
of Alexander's time
appetit: appetite OF.
approved pp. approved, true OF
aprover
Aprille, Aprill, Aprille: April
approcheth 3 pr. s. approacheth
OF **aprochier**
apresse: oppress, blame; cf.
opresse
aproprid pp. appropriated, inher-
ent in OF **aproprier**
aprovede pp. approved; cf.
approved
aqueynt inf. refl. make myself
acquainted OF **acointer**
aqueyntaunce: acquaintance OF
acointance
Arabe, Arabye: Arabia
Arabyen: Arabian OF.
arace inf. tear away, root out
OF **arachier**
aray: array, apparition OF **arai**
archeer: archer OF **archier**
archiwyves: wives who rule AS
arce + wif
Arcita, Arcite, Arcyte: Theban
noble, cousin of Palamon in the
Knight's Tale
arede inf. interpret AS **ārædan**
areest, areste: seizure, counsel,

deliberation; cf. **arreesté**. OF
areste
areste inf. stop, halt OF **arester**
arette imp. pl. impute; **aretted** pp.
OF **areter**
arewe: in a row AS on + **rāw**,
rāw f.
argued 3 pt. s. argued; **arguynge**
p. OF **arguer**
argumenten 3 pr. pl. argue OF.
argumentis: arguments
argumentz: argument, angle, arc,
etc., from which another quan-
tity may be deduced
Argus: the hundred-eyed guardian,
set by Juno to guard Io, slain
by Mercury. He is confused
(Du 435) with Aigus, or Abu
Ja'far Mohamed Ben Musa,
whose work on algebra intro-
duced the Arabic numerals
Aries cf. **Ram**
arist 3 pr. s. arises; **aros** 3 pt. s.
arose; **arys** imp. AS **ārīsan**
Aristoclide: a Greek tyrant
Aristotle: the great Athenian phil-
osopher and rhetorician
arive: disembarkation of troops for
assault OF.
ark: arc, entent along rim horizon
AS **arc**, **arce**
armen inf. arm; **armeth** imp. pl.;
armed pp. OF **armer**
armes, armys pl. arms, coat-of-
arms AS **earn** m.
arm-greet: as large as your arm
armlees: armless
armonye: harmony OF **harmonie**
Armorik: Armorica, Latin name
for Brittany
armoure: armor OF **armure**
armurers: armorers OF **armurier**
armynge sb. arming
armypotente: powerful in arms
Lat **armipotens**
arn 3 pr. pl. are
arowe, arwes pl. arrow AS
ar(e)we f.
arowe ad. in a row; cf. **arewe**
Arpies: Harpies, birds with female
heads, mentioned in Virgil
arrayed pp. equipped, prepared
OF **araier**

arreeste: arrest, confinement OF areste
arriage: arrears OF ariere + age
arrest: the rest, or lance support; in arrest] into position OF arest
Arrius: friend of Latumius (Palaestinus), two characters in Gesta Romanorum
ars-metrik: arithmetic Lat ars metrica
Arthemisia: Artemisia, wife of Mausolus, erected the mausoleum for his sepulchre
Arthur: Arthur, king of Britain
artificial day: "day," in which sun is above horizon
artow: art thou
Artoys: a province of France
art, arte: art, science; pers. Artificiality; specifically, Ovid's "Ars Amatoria," A 476
arwes: cf. arowe
aryht, aryght: aright ME on + right
aryve inf. come to land OF ariver
as: as if; used as expletive, with little meaning, slightly restrictive AS eal swā
as: ace OF as
asay: trial OF essai ob asaier
asaye: try; cf. assaye OF asaier
asayle inf. assail; cf. assaille OF assaillir
ascencioun of the equynoxial: ascension of the equinoctial, fifteen degrees, or one hour OF ascencion
ascendent: ascendant, point of ecliptic rising above horizon at given moment OF
ascendynge: in the ascendant; cf. ascendent
ascuse: excusē OF excuse
asken inf. ask; aske 2 and 3 pr. s. subj. AS āscian, ācsian
asking s. question
aslaked pp. assuaged AS āslacian
aslepe: asleep ME on + slep dat.
asonder a. asunder, apart AS onsundran
asp: aspen, poplar; aspe AS æsp, æspe f.

aspect: astrological situation; the relation between two planets OF aspect
aspre: fierce OF.
aspye: spy, see OF espier
assaille, asayle inf. assail; assailed pp. OF assailler
assaut sb. assault OF assaut
assay sb. test, trial OF assai
assay inf. try, test; assayed pp. OF assier
asse: ass AS assa m.
asged pp. besieged OF asieger
assemblen inf. assemble; assembled pp. OF assembler
assente inf. agree to, consent; assentid pp. OF assentir
asseureth 3 pr. s. assures OF aseürer
assh: ash tree AS æsc m. (i-stem)
asshen sb. pl. ashes AS asce f.
asshen a. ashen, pale
asshy: strewn with ashes
assise: assize OF assise "sitting"
assoille: absolve OF assoile pr. s. subj. of assoudre
assoillyng sb. absolution
asterte inf. escape, burst out; 3 pt. s. subj. might escape; asterted 3 pt. s.; astert pp. ME asterten; cf. AS sturtan
astonyed 3 pt. s. astonished
astoned, astonied, astonyd pp. OF estoner
astored pp. provided OF estorer
astrelabie: astrolabe, instrument for obtaining altitude of planets and stars Lat astrolabium
astrologien: astrologer, astronomer OF.
astronomye: really astrology, the science of the application of astronomy to human uses through prediction or through the supposed influence of the planets over the lives of men OF astronomie
asure: azure, blue OF azur
aswage: assuage, lessen OF asuagier
aswow, aswowne: in a swoon on + AS swōgen (geswōgen "senseless")
asyde: aside ME on + AS side f.

Asye: Asia, or Asia Minor OF
Asie
at: at, through, of; at all] in every
respect; at our large] free AS
æt
atake inf. overtake ME a + take
Atazir: influence Arab al-tazir
atemptry: temperate OF atempre
ateyn inf. attain, discover OF
ateindre, pr. stem ataign
Athalante: Atalante, a nymph, a
keen, swift huntress, beloved by
Hippomenes, and beaten by him
in a race through his dropping
of golden apples; she took part
with Meleager in the Calydonian
boar-hunt
Athalus: Attalus, reputed inventor
of chess
aton ad. at one] into reconcilia-
tion
atones, attones ad. at one time,
at once ME at + AS ānes
atrede inf. surpass in judgment
ME at + rede AS rēdan
atrenne inf. surpass in running
at + AS rinnan
att oo worde: in a word
attamed pp. brought on OF
atamer
atte: at the; atte beste] in the
best way; atte fulle] fully
attemperance: self-control OF
atemprence
atempre, attempre: temperate,
tempered, mild OF atempre
attendance: attentive service OF.
Attenes: Athens
attheyne inf. attain; cf. ateyn
Atthalante, *Athalante
atthamaunt: adamant, q. v.
Atthenes: Athens
Attheon: Actæon, a Grecian youth,
accidentally saw Diana bathing,
whereupon he was turned into a
stag and devoured by his own
dogs
Attila: Attila, "the scourge of
God," is said to have burst a
blood-vessel
attones: at one time; cf. atones
atweyne: in two ME on + tweyne
q. v.

atwo: in two ME on, a + two
q. v.
atyr: attire OF atire
auctoritee, autorite: authority,
authoritative statement OF
autorite
auctour, autours pl. author; in
B 4172 the reference is to
Cicero, author of De Divinatione
OF autor, auctour
audience: hearing OF.
auditour: auditor OF.
aught ad. at all AS āwiht
aught, ought: ought, owed AS
āhte
auncestre: ancestor OF ancestre
aungel: angel AS ængel, engel,
OF angele
aungellyche: like an angel
aunte: aunt OF aunte
auntrous: adventurous OF aven-
turos
Aurelian: Roman Emperor d. 275
Aurelius: a Breton squire
Aurora: the title of a Latin metri-
cal version of the Bible by Petrus
de Riga, in the twelfth century
Austyn: St. Augustine of Hippo,
author of the rules governing the
Augustinian canons
autentyke a. authentic OF
authentique
auter: altar OF auter AS altar
autorite: authority; autoriteis pl.
cf. auctoritee OF autorite
autours: authors; cf. auctour
availe, availle inf. avail, aid, be of
value; availleth 3 pr. s.; avayle
3 pr. pl OF a + valoir, pres.
stem vail
avalen inf. take down, cast down
OF avaler
avantage: advantage; doon his
avantage] employ his opportunity
OF.
avante, avaunte 1 pr. s. boast
OF avanter
avaunce inf. advance, aid OF
avancer
avaunt sb. boast, claim OF
avaunt
avauntage: advantage OF.
avaunte 1 pr. s. refl. boast OF.
avauntour: boaster OF.

avauntyng sb. boasting
Ave Marie: Ave Maria, Hail Mary
aventaille: the lower part of the helmet OF esventail
aventure: hap, fortune, chance OF.
Arveragus: a Breton knight < Celt name
Averill: April OF Avril
Averrois: Averroes, Moorish scholar and physician of twelfth century
avise, avyse 1 pr. s. refl. reflect OF aviser
avision: vision, dream OF.
avouterye: adultery OF avoutrie
avow sb. vow OF avoue
avowe inf. avow; **awowyth** 3 pr. s. vows OF avouer
Avoy! fie! OF avoy
Avycen: Avicenna, Ibn Sina, Arabian physician of the eleventh century, called the "Prince of Physicians"
avys: advice, discussion, opinion OF avis
avyse inf. take counsel with (refl.), consider, ponder; **avyseth** 2 imp. deliberate OF aviser
avysely: advisedly
avysement: consideration OF.
awake imp. s. awaken; **awaketh** imp. pl.; **awoked, awooke** 1 pt. s. AS āwacnan int. (weak) on-wæcnan (strong)
awapid, awhaaped pp. amazed ME a + whape; cf. **whap** to strike
awayt sb. watch, surveillance OF awaitier
awaytinges: services
awerke: at work ME on werke, petrified dat.
aweye: gone, absent AS on weg, āweg
awayward: away, backwards
awhaaped pp. amazed, dumb-founded; cf. **awaped**
awreke inf. avenge; **awreke pp.** AS on + wrecan
ax sb. axe AS æx, eax f.
axen inf. ask, seek, incur; **axe** 1 pr. s.; **axed** 3 pt. s.; **axsede** 3 pt. pl. AS ācsian
axing sb. request, question

ay ad. aye, always, ever AS ā, Icel ei
ayen, ayeyn: again; cf. ageyn
ayen, ayenst, ayeyns: opposite, against
ayleth 2, 3 pr. s. ails AS eglan
ayre: air OF air

B

ba: caress, kiss OF baēr "to open the mouth"
baar, bar 3 pt. s. bore; cf. bere
Babilon a. Babylonian
Babiloigne, Babyloyn: Babylon
bachelor: youth, candidate for knighthood OF.
bachelrye: young men OF bachelerie
bacoun: bacon OF bacon
Bacus: Bacchus, god of wine
bacyns: basins OF basin
bad 3 pt. s. bade; cf. bidde
bade 1 pt. s. bidde
badde a. bad (orig. unkn.)
badder: worse
baggepipe: bagpipe Icel baggi
bagges: bags Icel baggi
baggeth 3 pr. s. looks askance
baillif sb. bailiff, steward or overseer OF.
baiteth 3 pr. s. baits, pastures; cf. bayte
bak, bake, bakke sb. back AS bæc n.
bake pp. baked AS bacan
balade: a poem of three stanzas with "envoy"; the meter found in such a poem riming abab bcc
balaunce s. balance; in balaunce] in suspense OF.
Baldeswelle: Bawdeswell
bale: ill, sorrow; for hote ne bale] for good nor for ill AS balu, bealu n.
balke: beam AS balca "a heap," "ridge"
balled a. bald Gael bal "spot"
bane: death, destruction AS bana m. "slayer"
baner: banner, the signal for the muster of troops OF banere
banysshed pp. banished OF banir
Barbarye: heathendom

barbour: barber, who often acted as surgeon OF barbeor
 barbre: barbarian ME barbare < Lat barbarus
 barel: barrel; barel ale] barrel of ale OF baril
 baren 3 pt. pl. refl. behaved; cf. bere
 bareyne: barren OF baraine
 bargaynes sb. pl. bargains OF bargaigne
 barly: barley AS bærlic
 barm: bosom; barme dat. AS bearm m.
 Barnabo Viscounte: Bernabo Visconti, duke of Milan, died 1385
 baronage: assembly of barons, the nobility OF.
 barre: bar; barres: metal ornaments on a girdle OF.
 bataille, batayle sb. battle OF.
 batailled a. embattled, like a battlement
 bateth 3 pr. s. baits; cf. bayte
 Bathe: Bath, in Somerset, England
 bauderie: gaiety; cf. OF bauderie "boldness"
 baudes: bawds ME bawdstrot < OF baldestrot
 baudy: dirty
 bawdryk: baldric or belt worn over one shoulder OF baldric, baldrei
 bayte inf. bait, feed; baiteth 3 pr. s.; bateth ON beita "to make bite"
 be 3 pr. s. subj., imp., pp.; cf. ben AS bēon
 be prep. by; be my trouthe] truly, verily AS bi
 beare inf. bear; cf. bere; beare lyfe] live
 beaute: beauty; beauteis pl. OF.
 bech: beech tree AS bēce f.
 become inf. become; becomen pp.; wher is becomen] what has become of AS becoman
 bed: bed; bedde; beddes, beddys, bedis poss.; bedde pl. AS bed
 beddyng: bedding
 bede 1 pt. pl., pp. ordered; cf. bidde
 bedes pl. beads AS bed- (in comp.) prayer < biddan

beede 1 pr. s. offer; 2 pr. pl.; bede pp. AS bēodan
 beek sb. beak; bek OF bec
 beel amy: good friend OF bel ami
 beam sb. beam; bemes pl. AS bēam m.
 been pl. bees AS bēo f.
 beende: bend AS bendan
 beer 3 pt. s. bore; cf. bere
 beard: beard AS beard m.
 beere: bier AS bær f.
 beeste: beast OF beste
 beete inf. kindle, mend; betten 3 pt. pl. AS bētan
 befill 3 pt. s. happened; cf. bifalle AS befeallan
 befor: beforehand AS beforan
 began pt. s. beginne
 begge inf. beg OF begger
 begged: a begged] a-begging (old gerund ending -ath); cf. a
 beggere: begger OF begart
 beggestere: beggar woman OF beg + AS estere f. suff.
 begile inf. beguile, deceive be + OF guiler
 begoon: situated; cf. bigon
 beheette: promised AS behātan
 beholde, behelde: behold; on to behold] look upon AS behealdan
 behoteth 3 pr. s. promise; cf. behote AS behātan
 behynde: behind, in the rear ranks AS behindan
 bek: beak; bekys pl. OF bec
 bekke: beck, nod
 beleve inf. believe AS ge-lȳfan
 belle sb. bell AS helle
 Bellona: Goddess of War
 Belmarye: a Moorish kingdom in Africa, Benamarin
 bemes pl. trumpets AS bēmes
 bemes, bemys pl. beams AS bēam
 ben inf. to be; pp. AS bēon
 bene: bean AS bēan f.
 benedicite: bless ye; often pronounced as a three-syllable word, ben'cite, bendiste Lat.
 benefice sb. ecclesiastical living OF.
 benethen: beneath AS beneoðan
 bente: grassy slope AS beonet, "a grass"
 benygne a. kindly OF benigne

benygnely: lovingly
 benyngnytee: benignity OF benignite
 beo 3 pl. pr. be; cf. ben
 berafte 3 pt. s. bereft AS biræafian
 berd sb. beard; forked berd] forked beards were the custom among the bourgeois of Chaucer's day; make his berd] beguile him; double berd] two beards F 1252; cf. Janus AS beard m.
 bere sb. bear; beres poss. or pl. AS bera m.
 bere sb. bier; cf. beere
 bere sb. pillow case; cf. pilwebeer AS bere "covering"
 bere, ber inf. bear, endure; 1 pr. s.; 3 pr. s. subj. pierce; bereth 3 pr. s.; bar 3 pt. s.; bore, borne pp.; bere on honde] pretend, "bluff" AS beran
 berie inf. bury; beryed pp. AS byrgan
 berkyng sb. barking AS beorcan
 Bernard: St. Bernard (1091-1153)
 Bernard: Bernardus Gordonius, professor of medicine at Montpellier, was a contemporary of Chaucer
 berne: barn AS bern
 berth 3 pr. s. beareth; berth on honde] chargeth; cf. bere
 Berwyk: a town in Northumberland, on the Tweed
 berye sb. berry AS berie
 beryed pp. buried
 berynge: bearing, behavior
 beseche inf. beseech ME sechen
 besely, bisily: busily AS bisig
 besette inf. employ, bestow; 3 pt. s.; pp.; beset pp. be + AS settan
 besey pp. beseen; wel besey] good-looking, fair to see; cf. see
 bespreynte pp. sprinkled, bedewed AS besprengan
 beste sb. beast; bestis pl. OF beste
 besy: busy, anxious AS bysig
 besyede 3 pt. pl. busied AS bysgian
 besyly: busily
 besynesse: business AS bysig + ness

bet ad. better AS bet
 bet: better; go bet] go as rapidly as possible
 bete inf. amend; cf. beete. AS bētan
 bete 1 pr. s. beat, hammer; 3 pr. s. subj.; beten, bet pp. AS bēatan
 beter: better AS betra
 beth imp. pl. be
 bethenke 1 pr. s. refl. consider; imp.; bethoughte 1 pt. s. AS beþencan
 Bethulia: home of Judith q. v.
 bethynke inf. imagine, contrive
 betrayed 3 pt. s. betrayed be + OF trair
 betre ad. better
 betten 3 pt. pl. kindle; cf. beete
 betwex, betwixen, betwixsyn, betwixe: betwixt, between AS betweox
 betyde: happen ME be + tiden < AS tidan
 betyme: promptly be + time
 betyr: better
 Beute: Beauty
 bevere a. of beaver AS beofor m. (n)
 Beves: Sir Bevis of Hampton, a popular Middle English metrical romance
 bewayled 3 pt. s. bewailed ME be + wailen
 bewreye inf. betray be + AS wrēgan "accuse"
 beye inf. buy AS bycgan
 bi: of, about AS bī
 bibledde: drenched with blood AS bī + blēdan
 Biblis: Byblis, changed to a fountain on being rejected in love
 bicched: cursed (orig. uncert.)
 biclappe: catch AS clappan
 bidaffed pp. befooled (orig. uncert. < daff "fool")
 bidde: ask, command; bit 3 pr. s.; bade pt. s.; byd imp. AS biddan
 bifalle inf. befall; pp.; bifil pt. impers.; bifelle 3 pr. s. subj. AS befeallan
 bifore, biforn ad., prep. before AS beforan
 biforen ad. in the front of

biforn a. forehanded, prudent
 bigamye: bigamy, marrying twice
 OF bigamie
 bigan 3 pt. s. began; cf. bigynne
 AS beginnan
 bigeten pp. begotten AS be +
 gitan
 bigile inf. beguile; cf. begile ME
 be + OF guiler
 bigon: situated, beset; wel bigon]
 happy; wo bigon] distressed AS
 bigān
 bigonne 2 pt. s.; began pp. bord
 bigonne] sat at the head of the
 table; cf. bigynne
 bigynne inf. begin; bygynneth 3
 pr. s.; bigonne 2 pt. s.; bigan
 3 pt. s.; bigonne pp. AS be-
 ginnan
 biheeste: promise AS belāes
 biheete inf. promise; bihight pp.
 AS behātan
 bihight pp. promised; cf. biheete
 biholde inf. behold; cf. beholde
 bihote 1 pr. s. promise
 bihoveth: it is necessary, fitting
 AS bihōfian
 bihynde: behind
 biknowe inf. acknowledge, con-
 fess; biknewe 3 pt. pl. AS bi +
 cnāwan
 bileeve: creed AS gelēafa
 bileve: stay behind AS belāefan
 bille: bill, petition NorF bille >
 billet
 biloved pp. beloved AS be +
 lufian
 Bilyea: wife of Duellius; she was
 silent about his defects
 biquethe 1 pr. s. bequeath; pp.;
 AS becweðan "make a state-
 ment"
 biraft pp. bereft; cf. bireve
 bireve inf. bereave, deprive;
 birāfte 3 pt. s. bereft; biraft
 pp. AS birēafian
 biseged pp. besieged; cf. sege
 biseke 1 pr. s. beseech; biseken
 1 pr. pl.; bisekyng p. ME be
 + sechen
 bisette 3 pt. s. employed, used;
 cf. besette
 biseye pp. beseen, adorned; yvel

biseye] ill-appearing; cf. besey
 AS besēon
 bishrewe 1 pr. s. curse be + AS
 scrēawa "shrew-mouse"
 biside: near, beside; hym bisides]
 around him, at hand AS be sidan
 dat.
 bisily: busily
 bismotered pp. stained, soiled
 ME bi + smot; cf. Sw smuts
 "dirt"
 bistad: ill-situated, troubled ME
 bisteden < Scan; cf. AS stede
 bistowe: bestow bi + AS stōw,
 "place"
 bistrood 3 pt. s. bestrode AS
 bestrīdan
 bisy a. busy AS bysig
 bisynesse: business
 bit: but AS būtan
 bit 3 pr. s. biddeth; cf. bidde
 bitake 1 pr. s. commit AS be +
 ME taken
 biteche 1 pr. s. consign to AS
 bitācan
 bitokneth 3 pr. s. signifies ME
 be + AS getācnian
 bitore: bitter OF butore
 bitrayseth 3 pr. s. betrays;
 bitraysed pp. OF trair
 bittre: bitter AS bitter
 bityde inf. betide, happen to; 3
 pr. s. subj.; bitidde 3 pt. s. AS
 be + tidan
 bitynge: sharp AS bitan
 biwailen inf. bewail; biwailed
 pp.; cf. bewayled
 biwreye inf. reveal, betray be +
 AS wrēgan
 biyonde: beyond AS begeondan
 bladdre: bladder AS blādre f.
 blak: black; a man in blak] John
 of Gaunt, in black for the death
 of his duchess, Blanche AS
 blac, blac
 blakeberyed: a blackberrying, wan-
 dering
 blaked pp. turned black
 blame sb. censure OF blasmer
 blame inf. condemn; blamyd pp.
 blankmanger sb. a compound of
 capon, rice, milk, sugar and
 almonds, named from its color
 OF.

blaspheme sb. blasphemy Lat
blasphēmāre
blasphemour: blasphemer
bleched pp. bleached AS blæcan
bledde 3 pt. s., pl. bled AS
blēdan
Blee: Blean Forest, near Canter-
bury
blent 3 pr. s. blinds; pp. AS
blindan
blered pp. bleared, dimmed ME
bleren "to become watery"
blerying of an eye: cheating, trick-
ing
blew a. blue OF bleu
blew pt. s. blowe AS blāwan
bleynte 3 pt. s. blenched, drew
back AS blencan "deceive"
blisful a. happy, bliss-bestowing,
helpful AS bliþs + ful
blisse inf. bless AS blētsian
blody: bloody AS blōdig
blondren 1 pr. pl. blunder Norw
blundra "shut the eyes"
bloode: blood AS blōd n.
blosmy: full of blossoms AS
blōsma + y, ig
blowe inf. blow; blowe, blowen
pp. blown, proclaimed by her-
alds AS blāwan
blynd: blind AS blind
blysse: bliss, joy AS bliþs f.
blythe: glad AS bliþe
blythely: gladly
blyve: quickly, soon; as blyve]
very soon ME be + lȳve
bobance: brag, boast OF
Bobbe-up-and-down: a village near
Canterbury
bocher: butcher OF bochier
bode sb. delay < abood; cf. abyde
bode sb. foreboding AS bod n.
message
bode pp. bidden; cf. bede
body: body, corpse AS bodig
bodyn pp. bidden; cf. bidde
Boece: Boethius "De Consolatione
Philosophiæ," a Latin work in
prose and verse, popular in the
Middle Ages. Boethius (Boetius)
lived 475-524 A. D. He also
wrote a treatise on music. He
was put to death by Theodoric

boght pp. bought; boghte agayne]
redeemed; cf. bye
Boghtoun under Blee: Boughton-
under-Blean, a village five miles
from Canterbury
boille inf. boil, cook OF boillir
boistous: loud, rude < OF bois-
teus(?)
boistously: loudly
bok: book AS bōc f.
Boke of the Leoun: a lost work
of Chaucer's
bokeler: buckler, a small round
shield OF bucler
bokelynge: buckling
boket: bucket OF boket < AS
būc pitcher
bolde: to grow bold; cf. AS beal-
dian
boldely: boldly
boldenese: courage
boles: bulls AS bula(?)
Boloigne: Boulogne, France, on
English Channel, visited by pil-
grims because of an image of
the Virgin
Boloigne: Bologne in Italy
bombleth: makes a booming noise
ME < boonen < Du(?)
bonde s. bond OF bande
bonde pp. bound; cf. bynde
bone: boon, request Icel bōn AS
bēn f.
bontee: generosity OF.
boon: bone; bones pl. AS bān n.
boond 3 pt. s. bound; cf. bynde
boor: the Erymanthian boar slain
by Hercules AS bār m.
boot sb. boat AS bāt m.
boot 3 pt. s. bit; cf. byte
boote: help, remedy AS bōt f.
bootes pl. boots OF bote
boras sb. borax OF < Arab
bord sb. board, plank, side of
ship, table; bord bigonne] sat
at the head of the table; borde
AS bord n.
bord inf. to board OF aborder
bordit pp. jested OF bourder
bore pp. born; cf. bere
borel sb. coarse garments OF
burel "coarse woollen cloth"
borel a. rude; borel men] lay-
men

bores: boars; poss. AS *bār* m.
 borne pp. *bere*; cf. *bere*
 borowe, *borwe*: security; *seynt*
 John to borowe] St. John for
 security (protection on journey)
 AS *borg* m.
 borwe inf. borrow AS *borgian*
 bost sb. boast AF *boſt*
 bote sb. good; for bote ne bale]
 for good nor for ill AS *bōt* f.
 botel: bottle; a botel hey] bundle
 of hay OF *botel*
 boterflye: butterfly AS *butere* +
fleoge f.
 bothe pl., poss. pl. both AS *bā*, *bā*
 botme: bottom AS *botm* m.
 bouk: trunk of the body AS *būc*
 m.
 bounden pp. bound; cf. *binde*
 boundes: bounds AF *bounde*
 bountee: kindness, generosity OF
bonte
 bounteous: bountiful OF *bontif*
 bour, *bouris* pl. bower AS *būr* m.
 bourde: joke OF.
 bow, *bowys* pl. bough AS *bōg* m.
 bowe sb. bow AS *boga* m.
 bowen inf. bow; *boweth* 2 imp. s.;
bowyng p. AS *būgan*
 bowgh: bough, branch AS *bōg*
 m.
 bown: ready, prepared Icel *buinn*
 boxtree: symbolical for paleness
 AS *box* m.
 boydekyns: daggers, bodkins Gael
 orig.(?)
 boyste: box OF *boiste*
 bracer: a leather guard to protect
 the arm from the bowstring OF.
 Bradwardyn: Proctor at Oxford
 1325, afterwards chancellor
 brak 3 pt. s. broke; cf. *breke*
 bras: brass AS *bræs* n.
 brast 3 pt. s. subj. would burst;
 cf. *breſten*
 braunches: boughs OF *branche*
 brawen: brawn of the boar OF
braon
 brawnes: muscles
 brayed pp. started; cf. *breyde*
 brayn: brain AS *brægen* n.
 brede: breadth AS *brædu* m.
 breech: breeches AS *brēc*, s. of
brōc f.

breede, breed: bread AS *brēad* n.
 breek 3 pt. s. subj. broke; cf.
breke
 breem: bream, a fresh water fish
 OF *bresme*
 breeth: breath AS *bræð* m.
 breke inf. break, break off, go to
 pieces; *brake*, *broke* 3 pt. s.;
breek 3 pt. s. subj. AS *brecan*
 brekers: breakers, trespassers
 brekke: flaw, wrinkle AS *brece*(?)
 brembulfleur: flower of the bramble
 AS *brembel* m.
 breme: furiously, famously AS
brēme
 bren sb. bran OF.
 brenne, bren inf. burn; 3 pr. pl.;
brendest 2 pt. s.; *brende*, *brente*
 3 pt. s.; *brend*, *brent* pp. AS
bærnan
 brennyng sb. burning
 brennyngly: ardently
 breres: briars AS *brær* f.
 brest sb. breast; *breſte*. AS
brēost n.
 breſten inf. break, burst; *breſt*
 3 pr. s.; *bruſte*, *broſten* 3 pt. pl.;
breſte 3 pr. s. subj; *braſt* 3 pt.
 s. subj. AS *berſtan*
 bretful a. brimful AS *brerd*
"brim" + *ful*
 bretherhood: brotherhood AS
broðor + *hood*
 breyde 3 pt. s. cast; *brayed* pp.
 AS *bregdan*
 brist: breast; cf. *breſt*
 bristplate: breastplate OF *plate*
 Britaigne: Brittany, Bretagne in
 France
 Britons: Britons, the Welsh
 Brixseyde: Briseis, beloved by
 Achilles, and cause of his quarrel
 with Agamemnon (Iliad I)
 broche: brooch OF.
 brod sb. brood AS *brōd* f.
 brode a. broad AS *brād*
 brode ad. broadly, plainly
 broght pp. brought; cf. *bryngen*
 broille inf. broil AF *broiller*
 broke 3 pt. s. broke; cf. *breke*
 bronde: brand, fire brand AS
brand m.
 brosten, broste 3 pl. pt. burst; cf.
breſten

brotelnesse: frailty; cf. **brutelnesse**
brother: brother; brother, brothres
 poss. s. AS brōðor
brouded pp. embroidered OF
 broder
broughte 3 pt. s.; broughten 3 pt.
 pl. brought; cf. bryngen
brouke: enjoy the use of AS
 brūcan
broun, broune a. brown AS
 brūn
browdyng: embroidery
browes: brows AS brū, pl. brūa,
 brūwa f.
browken 3 pr. pl. subj. enjoy; cf.
 brouke
browhte 3 pt. s. brought
broyded pp. braided OF broder
 + AS bregdan, by confusion
Bruges: Bruges, city in Belgium
bruste: 3 pt. pl. burst; cf. bresten
brustles: bristles
brutelnesse: instability, "brittle-
 ness" ME brotel < AS brēotan
 "break" + nesse
Brutes Alboun: Brutus Albion,
 England, founded according to
 legend by Brutus
Brutus Cassius: an error by
 Chaucer for Brutus and Cassius,
 the conspirators (the symbol &
 being probably omitted in Vin-
 cent of Beauvais, Chaucer's
 source)
bryddis: birds AS bridd m.
brydel sb. bridle, rule AS bridel
brydeleth 3 pr. s. bridles, governs
 in love
bryghte: bright AS berht, beorht
brymstoon sb. brimstone, sulphur
 ME brenstoon "burning stone"
bryngen inf. bring; broughte,
 browhte 3 pt. s.; broughten 3 pt.
 pl.; broght pp. AS bringan
brynke: brink Icel brekka(?)
 "crest of hill"
brynne: burn; cf. brenne
buk, bukke: buck, so-called from
 the sixth year on AS bucca m.
bulles: bulls, papal edicts Lat
 bulla "seal"
bulte 3 pt. s. built AS byldan
bulte it to the bren: sift to the
 bran OF bulter

Burdeux: Bordeaux: **Burdeux-**
ward: the region of Bordeaux
burdoun sb. burden of song, bass
 accompaniment OF bourdon
burel: of rough cloth; hence, rude;
 cf. borel
burgeys sb. burgess OF burgeis
burghes: towns AS burg f.
burned pp. burnished OF burnir
Burnel the Asse: Burnellus seu
 speculum stultorum (The Mir-
 ror of Fools) by Nigel Wireker
 about 1200
burthe sb. birth Icel byrð f.
burye inf. bury AS byrgan
buryeles: burial-places < AS
 byrigels, tomb
Busirus: Busiris, a king of Egypt,
 slain by Hercules, confused by
 Chaucer with Diomedes, king of
 Thrace, of whom the story of
 the mare is told B 3293
buskes: bushes Scan busk
bussh: bush; bussh unbrent] the
 burning, but unconsumed, bush
 which Moses saw was consid-
 ered a symbol of Mary's constant
 virginity
but conj. unless, except AS būtan
but ad. but, only; prep. without
but if: unless
butiller: butler OF butuiller
buxomly: obediently AS bühsum
 + lic
buxhumnesse: obedient spirit
by: for, concerning, by the example
 of, with reference to
by and **by:** side by side
by **ony weye:** in every way
bycause: because ME bi + cause
byd imper. order; cf. bidde
byde inf. wait AS biðan
bye inf. buy, pay for; bie 1 pr. s.
 AS bycgan
byfore, byforen: before AS beforan
byheste: behest, promise; pers.
byhove inf. need AS bihōfian
byjaped pp. befooled, tricked OF
 japper "yap"
byldere: builder, used in building
byle: bill AS bile m.
bynde inf. bind; bynt 3 pr. s.;
 boond 3 pt. s.; bonde pp.;
 bounden pp. AS bindan

byndyng sb. binding
 bynne: bin AS binn
 bynt 3 pr. s. binds; cf. bynde
 byte inf. bite, take hold; bytith 3 pr. s.; boot 3 pt. s. AS bitan
 bythoght pp. bethought AS bipencan
 byttnesse: bitterness
 byynge: buying

C

caas sb. chance, misfortune; pl. cases of law OF cas
 cachce, cachche inf. win; caughte, kaught 1 pt. s., pl.; kaught, kaute pp. NorF cachier
 Cacus: a famous giant, robber and cannibal, strangled by Hercules
 Cadmus: the founder of Thebes; Cadme
 cake: round, flat loaf of bread Icel kaka
 calandier: calendar, record OF < Lat.
 Calistopee: Callisto; cf. Calyxte
 calle: caul, close cap or net OF cale
 calle inf., 3 pt. s. call; callid 2 pt. pl. Icel kalla AS ceallian
 Calyxte: Callisto, nymph of Diana, ancestress of the Arcadians, turned into a bear (the star Arctus) for her infidelity to chastity
 camaille: camel NorF camel
 Cambalo: son of Cambynskan
 Cambynskan: Genghis Khan, grandfather of Kublai Khan
 Campaneus: Capaneus, one of the Seven against Thebes
 Canacee: Canace, sister and mistress of Macareus (Ovid)
 Canacee: daughter of Cambynskan
 Cananee: Canaanitish
 Candace: queen of India, beloved of Alexander
 candel: candle AS candel
 Cane: Cana, town in Galilee, John ii. 1
 canal-boon: collar bone OF canel "channel"
 canoun: the "Canon in Medicine," a work by Avicenna

cantel: portion ONorF cahtel
 capitayn: captain OF capitaine
 Capitolie: the Capitol in Rome
 Cappaneus: Capaneus, one of the seven heroes who besieged Thebes; killed by a thunderbolt as he was scaling the wall
 cappe: cap; sette hir aller cappe] cheated them all AS cæppe
 capul: nag Icel kapall(?)
 cardyacle: heart-spasm Lat.
 care: care, trouble; a sory care] a misfortune AS caru f.
 careyne, carayne: carcase, carrion OF caroigne
 carf 3 pt. s. carved. Carving was one of the duties of the squire
 carie inf. carry; caryeden 3 pt. pl.; caried pp. ONorF carier
 carynge: carrying
 carl: churl, low fellow AS ceorl m.
 carole inf. dance to the accompaniment of a song sung by the dancer OF.
 caroles pl. a dance with singing OF.
 carolewyse: like a carol
 carpe inf. chatter, talk Icel karpa
 carpenteris poss. carpenter's ONorF carpentier
 Carrenare: Various attempts have been made to explain the "dry sea" and the "Carrenare." The former has been explained variously as the Sahara, the "Gravelly Sea" of Mandeville, the variable Lake of Czirknitz, and the "Adrye Se" or Adriatic. Carrenare is generally explained as the Gulf of Carnaro. J. L. Lowes has collected good evidence to show that the dry sea is the Lop Nor (sand lake) or Desert of Gobi in Asia, near which was situated a Kara Nor (Black Lake). Both of these are close to the old overland caravan route from China, and are found on medieval maps. To go "hoodeles" there would be a test of love, indeed. Such tests of love are a common convention in Chaucer's time

Cartage: Carthage, ancient city on the African shore of the Mediterranean

carte: cart, chariot AS cræt n.

cartere: carter, charioteer

caryeden 3 pt. pl. carried

cas: luck, chance, case

Cassandra: the daughter of King Priam, had the power of prophecy, but also a curse which prevented belief in her prophecies. Therefore she had the sorrow of foreseeing all the misfortune of the city without being able to use her knowledge and prevent the coming evils

cast sb. plan, occasion Icel kast

caste 1 pr. s., 3 pt. s. cast, conjecture, purpose, plan; **casteth** 3 pr. s.; **cast pp.**; with hys on ye caste up] looked up Icel kasta

castel: castle; **longe castel:** a reference to Lancaster, John of Gaunt ("seynt Johan"), earl of Richmond ("ryche hille"), and husband of Blanche ("with walles whyte") AS castel

castigacioun: punishment Lat castigatio

casuelly: by accident OF casuel

catel sb. chattel, property OF.

Catoun: Cato

caughte 3 pt. s. caught; cf. **cacche**

Caunturbury: Canterbury

cause: cause, purpose, plea, reason; cause why] there's a reason OF.

causeles: without reason

caytyf sb., caytayves pl. prisoner, wretch OF caitif

caytyf a. wretched

Cecile, Cecilia: Cecilia, Christian martyr, died at Rome 230 A. D.; cf. **heven** for explanation of etymologies

ceint sb. girdle OF.

celerer: cellarer OF cellerier

celle sb. a small monastery under the control of another monastery; **celle. fantastik:** the part of the brain whence fancies arose; the brain was divided into three cells, each the seat of a different faculty OF celle

cely: silly, innocent, poor AS sælig

Cenobia: Zenobia, queen of Palmyra

centaure, centaury: an herb OF centorye

Centauros acc. pl. Centaurs, fabulous half-man, half-horse

centence: sentence, matter OF.

centre: fulcrum, pivot OF.

centris: centres, the small brass projection on the rete of astrolabe, denoting position of fixed star (Sk.)

ceptre: sceptre OF.

Cerberus: the three-headed watchdog of Hades

cerclod pp. extended in a circle

circles: circles OF.

cerial: a kind of oak Lat cerreus

ceriously: minutely Lat ceriose, seriose

certainly ad. certainly OF certain

certes, certis: truly OF.

certeyn a. certain, sure OF certain

certeyn ad. certainly, surely

ceruce sb. a cosmetic made from white lead OF ceruse

cerymonyes: observances of forms of courtship OF ceremonie

Cesar: Julius Cæsar

Cesar: Cæsar, the emperor; Augustus L 592

cese, cesse inf. cease OF cesser

cetewale: valerian, an herb OF citoual

chaar: chariot OF.

chaast: chaste OF chaste

chaastnesse: chastity OF chast

chace inf. chase, hunt, drive OF chacer

chaffare: bargaining, business AS cēap price + faru f. business

chaffare inf. bargain

chaier: chariot OF chaiere

Chaldeye: Chaldæa

challenge inf. claim; **chalange** 1 pr. s. OF.

chamberere: chambermaid OF.

chamberleyn: chamberlain OF chambrelenc

chambre: chamber; marriage-cham.

ber, marriage; chambre of parentz] presence-chamber OF.
champartie: equality, division of power OF.
champioun sb. champion OF.
chanon: canon, member of religious order, like monks, but under different rule
chaped pp. provided with metal mountings OF **chape**
chapeleyne: chaplain; the office is held by a nun OF.
chapiteris: chapters OF.
chapman: merchant AS *cēap* + man
chapmanhode: trade, business
charbocle: carbuncle OF **charboncle**
chare: chariot OF **char**
charg, **charge** sb. care, trouble, responsibility OF.
charite: charity, love OF.
Charles Olyver: Charlemagne's Olyver, a peer of France, brother-in-arms of Roland
chasted pp. taught OF **chastier**
chasteyn: chestnut OF **chastaigne**
chastise inf. discipline OF.
chastitee: chastity OF.
chaunce: chance, incident OF.
chaunge sb. exchange OF.
change inf. change
chaungeable a. changeable, fickle
chauntepleure: half joy, half sadness, a song of alternate spirits OF.
chauntery sb. chantry, an endowment to pay a priest to sing daily masses for the soul of the giver of the endowment, or of some one designated by him OF **chanterie**
chayer: chair, palanquin OF **chaiere**
cheep: market; greet **cheep**] low price, cheap (in modern sense) AS *cēap* m.
cheere sb. cheer, manner, behavior, countenance OF **chere**
chees 2 imp. choose; cf. **chese**
chefe a. chief OF **chef**
chek: "check!" in chess; check and mate] checkmate, a term in chess denoting that the king cannot

be moved. This ends the game OF **eschec**
cheke: cheek-bone; pl. cheeks AS *cēace* f.
chekkere s. chess-board OF.
Chepe: Cheapside (market street) London
cher, **chere**: manner, look; cf. **cheere**
cherisseth 3 pr. s. cherishes; **cherish** imp. s. OF *cheris-* < *cherir*
cherl: churl, base fellow, menial; **cherles** poss. used as ad. churlish AS *ceorl*
cherlyssh: churlish
cherubynnes poss. pl. the cherubim were generally painted red in medieval pictures
cheryse inf. cherish OF **cheris-**
chese inf. choose; imp.; **ches** 1, 3 pt. s.; **chose** pp. AS *cēosan*
chesse: game of chess OF.
cheste: coffin AS *cest*
chesynge: choosing
chevache: journey a-horseback OF **chevauchie**
chevetayn: chieftain, leader OF **chevetain**
chevise refl. do for herself OF **chevir**
chevyssaunce: contract for borrowing money, note OF **chevissance** "accomplishment"
cheyne: chain; **cheynes** pl. Zenobia was so weighed down with gold chains and gems that she could scarcely walk B 3554 OF **chaēne**
Chichivache: the lean cow which, in the old fable, lived upon patient wives, and in consequence was always very lean OF.
chidde 1 pt. s. **chid**; cf. **chyde**
chiere: mien; cf. **cheere** OF.
chiertee: regard, good-will OF.
chiknes pl. chickens AS *cīcen*
Child, **Childe**: a title for a squire or a knight, as **Childe Harold** AS *cild*
childely a. childish, immature
childhede: childhood
chirch, **chirche**: church AS *cirice*
chirche-dore: church-door; couples were married in the church-porch,

and then entered the church for mass
chirkyng: harsh noise, creaking AS cearcian
chiste: chest AS cist
chivalrie: knighthood, with its customs and ideals; knightly prowess; group of knights OF.
choghe, chough: crow; cf. AS cēo
chose pp. chosen; cf. **chese**
choys: choice OF choix
chuk: cluck, clucking noise
chukketh 3 pr. s. clucks
chyde: chide, scold; **chidde** 1 pt. s. AS cidan
chymbe: the rim of a barrel, stave ends AS cim
chymbe inf. chime OF cymbe NF chimbe
chyn: chin AS cin
chyvachee: exploit a-horseback, military expedition OF che-vauchie
Cibella: Cybele, Great Mother of the Gods
Cilinius: Mercury, born on Mt. Cyllene in Greece
Cipion: cf. Scipiou
Cipre: Cyprus
cypress, cipresse: cypress, the symbol of mourning OF cypres
Circes: Circe, the sorceress who turned Odysseus's companions into swine by an enchanted cry. Odysseus forced her to restore his companions
circumstaunce: ceremony OF.
Cirea: Cirra, a town near Parnassus
Cirus: Cyrus, king of Persia
ciser: cider OF sisre
citee: city OF cite
Cithe, Cithea: Scythia
Citherea: a name for Venus, who was fabled to have risen from the sea near the island of Cythera
Citheroun: Cithæron or Cythera, island sacred to Venus
citole: a psaltery, a stringed instrument OF.
citryn a. citron, yellow OF citrin
cladde 3 pt. s. clothes; **cledde**, clothed pp. AS (North) clædde

clamb 3 pt. s. climbed; cf. clymben
clamour: clamor OF.
clappe: noise, chatter; cf. Icel klappa
clappeth 3 pr. s.; imp. pl. chatter
clappyng: chattering
clariounes: clarions, trumpets OF clarion
clarre: wine mixed with honey and spices, and strained "clear" AF claret
clateren 3 pr. pl. clatter; **clatereden** 3 pt. pl.; cf. AS clatrunge, a rattle
claterynge: clattering
Claudius: Marcus Claudius, the "cherl" of Appius Claudius
Claudius: the second emperor of Rome 268-270
Claudian: Claudius Claudianus, author of "De Raptu Proserpinæ," about A. D. 400
clawe inf. scratch, rub, stroke; **clawed** 3 pt. s. AS clawu f.
cledde pp. covered
cleer, cleere: clear, unspotted OF cler
cleernesne: brightness, glory
cleft 3 pt. s. split; **cloven** pp. AS clifian
clemence: clemency, pity OF.
clene: clean, smooth, neat AS clæne
clenly: cleanly
clennesse: cleanness, purity
clense inf. cleanse AS clænsian
Cleopataras: Cleopatra
clepen inf. call; **clepith, clepeth** 3 pr. s.; **clepe** 3 pr. pl.; **cleped** pp. AS cleopian
cler, clere a. clear OF cler
clere ad. clearly
clerer: clearer
clergeon: chorister, choir-boy OF.
clergy: learning OF.
clerk: the term for a student in university, a scholar preparing for the priesthood, a learned man, or a man in holy orders AS clerc
Clipatre: Cleopatra, queen of Egypt
clippe: cut Icel klippa
Clitermystra: Clytemnestra, wife of

Agamemnon, slew him with the help of Ægisthus, her lover
 clobbered: clubbed
 cloistre: met, enclosure; cf. cloystre OF.
 cloke: cloak OF.
 klokke: clock; at the klokke] o'clock OF cloke
 clombe 1 pt. s. climbed; clombe, clomben pp.; cf. clymben
 clos inf. close; closed pp. OF clos < clore
 clooth: cloth, clothing; clooth of Tars] a kind of silk AS clāð m.
 clooth-makyng sb. cloth-making, an important industry in Western England
 clos: close, yard OF clos
 clote-leef: leaf of burdock AS clāte
 clothe: cloth
 clothered: clotted AS clott
 cloumbe pp. climbed
 clout: bit of cloth; cloutes pl. rags AS clūt m.
 cloven pp. cleft, split
 clowde: cloud AS clūd m.
 clove-gylofre: clove OF clou "nail"
 cloysterer: a retiring, secluded monk
 cloystre sb. cloister OF cloistre
 clyffes pl. cliffs AS clif n.
 clymben inf. climb; clymbeth 3 pr. s.; clombe 1 pt. s.; clamb 3 pt. s.; clomben, cloumbe pp. AS climban
 clymbyng: climbing, ambition
 clynkyn inf. ring; cf. Fries klinken
 clynkyng: jingling
 cod: bag, belly AS cod m.
 cofere, cofre: box, coffer, coffin OF cofre
 cok: cock (to awaken us) AS cocc
 cokewold: cuckold, deceived husband OF cucualt
 cokkel: cockle, a weed AS coccel
 Cokkes: slang for Goddes
 cokkow: cuckoo OF cucu
 colblak: coal-black AS col
 colde: cold, fatal AS ceald
 coides inf. make cold AS cealdian
 cole sb. coal AS col n.

cole a. cool, without imaginative fire AS cōl
 colera: choler, with blood made rede colera Lat cholera
 colered pp. collared, decked with a collar OF coler
 colerik: choleric, hot tempered OF cholerique
 colfox: fox tipped with black, as with coal
 collacioun: conference OF collation
 collect yeeris: anni collecti, a term for periods of years in round numbers (20, 40, 60, etc.)
 collusioun: plot OF.
 Cologne: Cologne, where the bones of the three Wise Men of the East were said to be preserved
 colour, colore: color, pretense; under colour] in the guise of, masked under P 66; colours: fine phrases E 16; colouris pl. OF.
 colpons: portions, bunches OF.
 coltes: colt's, frisky AS colt
 comande, comaunde inf. command, order OF comander
 comandement: command
 comandour: director
 comaundyng: commanding
 come sb. coming < AS cyme
 come inf. come; cometh 3 pr. s.; come pt. s., pp., pr. s. subj.; cometh imp. < AS cuman
 comelely ad. handsomely, gracefully AS cymlic
 comelynesse: comeliness, beauty
 comende inf. commend OF comender
 commissioun sb. commission
 commune sb. the commons; commoners pl. OF.
 commune, comoun a. common; in commune] commonly
 compaas, compas: circle, orbit OF.
 compaignye, companye: company, group, lovers OF compaignie
 comparisoun: comparison OF.
 compassioun: compassion OF.
 compassyng: contrivance
 compeer: comrade, gossip OF compere
 compilatour: compiler OF.
 complexioun: complexicn OF.

compleyne inf. complain; 2 pr. pl.
compleynt: complaint, lament OF
 compleint
composicioun: agreement; pl. elaborate arrangements OF.
compowned pp. constructed, adapted Lat componere
comprehende inf. understand, appreciate; **comprehendid** pp. Lat comprehendere
comune a. accustomed (to); cf. commune
comunly: commonly
comyn, cumin: a spice OF cumin
comyn inf. come; **comyth** 3 pr. s.; cf. come AS cuman
concluden inf. conclude, include Lat concludere
concubyn sb. concubine OF concubine
condescende inf. stoop to OF condescendre
condicion, condicioun: condition, stipulation, character OF.
condicioneel: conditional OF conditional
confedred pp. confederated, united Lat confœderatus
confermed pp. confirmed, decreed; **confermeth** imp. pl. OF confermer
confessioun sb. confession; power of confessioun] the right to hear confession OF.
confiture: confection, compound OF.
confort: comfort OF.
conforteth 3 pr. s. comforteth; **conforten** pr. pl.
confus: confused OF.
congregacioun: assemblage OF.
conjoynynge sb. conjunction
conquereden 3 pt. pl. conquered OF conquerre
conquerour: conqueror OF.
conquerynge sb. conquest
consaille 1 pr. s. counsel OF conseil
conscience: pity, sympathy OF.
consecrat: consecrated Lat consecratus
conseil sb. council, counsel, secret counsel, secret, counsellor OF.

conseille inf. counsel OF conseiller
conseillyng sb. counsel
consentant of: accomplices in OF.
consente inf. agree to OF consent
conserve 2 imp. s. preserve OF.
conseyve inf. understand OF conceive
considere 1 pr. s., imp. consider OF considerer
consistorie: place of judgment OF.
consolacioun: consolation OF.
conspiracie: plot OF.
constable: governor; **constablesse** f. OF constable
constance: constancy OF.
Constantyn: Constantinus Afer, a monk of Monte Cassino, founder of school of Salerno, eleventh century
constellacioun: constellation OF.
constreyneth 3 pr. s. constrains; **constreyned** pp. OF constraindre
kontek: strife OF contec
contenance, contaunce: countenance, demeanor; sign OF.
continueel: continual OF.
contraire, contrarie sb. adversary, opposite OF.
contrarien inf. oppose AF contrarie
contrarius: opposite
contrarye a. contrary
contre, contree, contrey: country, district OF contree
contynue: encourage, further OF continuer
converte: turn, change; **convertynge** p. OF convertir
convoyen inf. convey; **convoyen** his mateere] give his information; **convoyed** pp. accompanied OF conveyer
conyes: rabbits OF conil
cold a. cold AS ceald
coomb: comb (of a cock) AS camb
coome 3 pr. s. subj.; cf. come
coomen 3 pt. pl. came
coost, cost: coast, countryside; by the cost] along the coast OF coste
coote: coat OF cote

cop sb. top AS cop
 cope sb. priest's cloak AS cape f.(?)
 coppe: cup, measure; withouten coppe] without stint AS cuppe f.
 corage: heart, spirit, disposition OF.
 corageus: courageous OF corageos
 corde sb. cord OF.
 Cordewane: Cordovan leather OF cordewan
 cordial: gold, in the form of aurum potable, was used in medicine. Chaucer's play upon words is obvious Lat cordialis
 cormeraunt: cormorant OF cormerant
 corne: corn, grain (not the Indian corn of America), wheat, best part; pl. fields of corn AS corn n.
 corniculer: secretary Lat corniculer
 corny: strong of corn or malt
 corone: garland Lat.
 coroned pp. crowned OF coroner
 coroune: crown OF corone
 corowne: crown
 corps: corpse OF.
 corpus: body; corpus dominus: for corpus domini, the Lord's body
 correcioun: correction, punishment OF.
 corruptable: corruptible OF corruptable
 corrupcioun: corruption OF.
 corrupteth pr. s. becomes corrupt; corrupt pp. Lat.
 cors: corpse OF.
 corsed pp. accursed AS cursian
 Corynne: Corinna, Ovid's mistress, celebrated in his "Amores," the source of "Anelida and Arcite"
 cost: choice, condition; nedes cost] of necessity OF cost
 costage: cost, expense OF.
 costes for to quite: to pay expenses
 coste: inf.; pt. s. cost OF coster
 cosyn: cousin OF cosin
 cotage: cottage AS cot + -age
 cote sb. coat OF.
 cote: cot, cottage, dungeon AS cote
 cote-armure, cote-armour: the coat

or vest worn over the armor, embroidered with the knight's armorial bearings
 couche sb. bed OF.
 couche inf. cower, lie, set;
 couche 3 pt. s. set in order;
 couched pp. laid, studded, beset OF coucher
 coude pt. s. could; cf. konne
 counseyl sb. counsel; cf. conseil
 counted, counte pt. s. counted, cared OF conter
 countenaunce: looks, facial expression; OF contenance
 counter, countour: one who counts, mathematician Du 435; abacus, or counting board Du 436; accountant or auditor A 359
 counterfete, countrefete inf. counterfeit OF contrefait pp.
 countesse: countess OF.
 countretaille: at the countretaille] in reply OF countretaille
 countyrpletyd pp. pleaded against OF contre + plaidier
 cours: course, orbit, way, course (of a meal) OF.
 courseres: coursers, war-horses OF coursier
 courtepy sb. short coarse cloak Du kort "short" + pije "coarse cloth"
 couthe 1 pt. s. could, knew; known pp.
 coveiteth: covets; cf. coveten AF coveiter
 coveitise, coveityse, coveitytse: covetousness, greed OF coveitise
 covenable: natural, proper, fit OF.
 covenant sb. agreement; covenantz pl. OF.
 covent: convent OF.
 coverchief: kerchief or head covering OF couvrechef
 coveten inf. covet; coveiteth pr. s. OF coveiter
 covyne sb. deceitful agreement of two men against a third; covin (law term) conspiracy OF covin
 cow: chough, jackdaw; cf. AS cēo
 cowardye: cowardice OF couardie
 cowntenaunce: appearance OF.
 coyn, coyne: coin OF coin, coign

cracchynge: scratching orig. uncert.; cf. MS *scratten*
cradel sb. cradle AS *cradol*
craft, crafte sb. skill, cunning, art, profession, trade AS *cræft*
craftier: more crafty
crafty: crafty, skilful
crampaished: cramped, paralyzed OF *crampe*
creacioun: creation OF *creation*
creance: belief, faith, object of belief OF *creance*
creat pp. created Lat *creatus*
creatour: Creator OF *creatour*
creest: crest OF *creste*
creature: creature, person OF
Creon: tyrant of Thebes
crepe inf. creep; **crepeth** 3 pr. s.; **crepte** 3 pt. s.; **cropen pp.** AS *crēopan*
Cresus: Croesus, king of Lydia, famed for his wealth, and for his unhappy downfall
crewel: cruel OF *cruel*
creweltee: cruelty OF *cruelte*
cri sb. cry OF *cri*
crien inf. cry, cry for; **crien** 3 pr. pl.; **crye** 2 pr. pl.; **cridestow** 2 pt. s. did you cry; **cride**, **cried** 3 pt. s.; **criden**, **crieden**, **criedyn**, **crydon**, **cryede** 3 pt. pl.; **crie imp.** OF *crier*
Crisippus: Chrysippus, name of some Greek philosopher, mentioned by Jerome
crisp, crispe: curly AS *crisp*
Criseyde: "Troilus and Criseyde," Chaucer's poem
cristal stones: glass cases
Cristemasse: Christmas AS *cristes mæsse*
cristen, cristene a. Christian AS *cristen*
cristendom: the Christian faith B 351 Christian lands AS
cristenly: as a Christian
Cristes poss. Christ's
cristned pp. christened AS *crist-nian*
Cristophere: a small figure of St. Christopher was frequently worn for good luck
cristyanytee: company of Christians

crynge p. crying
croce: stick, staff OF *croce*
croked: crooked, wrong ME *crōk* + *ed*
crockedly: crookedly
crokke: crock, jar AS *crocca*
crommes: crumbs AS *crūma*
cronycle sb. chronicle OF *cron-ique*
cropen pp. crawled; cf. **crepe**
croper: crupper OF *cropere*
croppe: top, sprout, branch end, crop, fruit AS *cropp m.*
croude inf. drive out AS *crūdan*
crowned, crowned pp. OF *coroner*
crowdyng: pushing
crowe sb. crow AS *crāwe f.*
crowe inf. crow; **croweth** 3 pr. s. refl.; **crew** 3 pt. s. AS *crāwan*
croys sb. cross OF *crois*
cruel: cruel OF
crueltee: cruelty
crulle a. pl. curled ON *kurle*
cryature: person; cf. **creature**
crydon, cryede 3 pt. pl. **cried;** cf. **crie**
cryke sb. creek OF *crique*
cubites: cubits Lat *cubitus*
cum of: come away, cease (*jocular*)
cumpas: a circle OF *compas*
cunne 3 pr. pl. know how; cf. **conne** AS *cunnan*
cuntre-houses: native homes
Cupide, Cupido: Cupid, God of Love, represented as a young man in Chaucer
cuppe: cup AS *cuppe f.*
curat sb. curate, parish priest Lat *curatus*
cure sb. cure, remedy, care, heed, diligence; **diden cure]** were busy; **take no cure]** care not OF *cure*
curios, curious a. careful, skilful OF *curios*
curre: cur Scan *kurre*
curs sb. curse AS *curs*
cursede a. accursed
cursen inf. curse, excommunicate AS *cursian*
cursydnesse: curse, sin
cursyng: cursing
curteis a. courteous OF *curteis*

curteisie, curteysie, curtesye sb.
 courtesy, ways of court OF.
 curtyn: curtain OF cortine
 curyosytee: subtle care OF curi-
 osite
 curyus: carefully wrought OF
 curios
 Custance: Constance
 custume: custom OF custume
 cut: lot; cf. W. cuturs, a lot
 cynk: cinq, five OF cinq
 Cypride: Venus, born at Paphos
 in Cyprus
 Cypyon: Scipio
 Cytherea: Venus; cf. Citherea

D

daggere: dagger F dague
 daisie: daisy AS dāgesēge
 daliaunce: friendly talk, gossip OF
 daliance
 Dalida: Delilah, the Philistine
 woman who discovered the secret
 of Samson's strength and be-
 trayed him to the Philistines;
 cf. Judges xvi.
 damage: pity OF.
 Damascien: Johannes Damascenus,
 Arabian physician of probably
 the ninth century
 dame: mother, goodwife; madame]
 madam OF.
 damoysele: damsel OF damoisele
 dampnable: damnable OF damn-
 able
 dampnacioun: damnation OF
 damnation
 dampned pp. condemned OF
 damner
 Damyssene: Damascene; Eden was
 thought to have been near
 Damascus
 Dane: Daphne, pursued by Apollo,
 was saved from him by being
 turned into a laurel tree. Hence
 the laurel is Apollo's tree
 Dant, Dante: Dante Alighieri,
 1265-1321, Italian poet, wrote
 "Divina Commedia"
 Danyel: Daniel
 dappull-gray: dapple-gray Icel
 depill "spot"
 dar 1, 3 pr. s. dare; darst 2 pr. s.;

dorste, durst, durste pr., pt., pr.
 subj. AS dear
 Dares Frygius: Dares the Phry-
 gian. He is mentioned together
 with Dictys Cretensis, as the
 source of the history of the Tro-
 jan War written by Guido delle
 Colonne, who really took his
 material from the Roman du
 Troie of Benoît de Sainte-Maure.
 Guido's history was popular;
 Chaucer uses material from it
 elsewhere
 darreyn inf. to decide one's claim
 to OF deraïsnier
 dart, dartis pl. dart, spear, set up
 as prize in races OF dart
 Daryus: Darius, king of Persia
 daswen 3 pr. pl. blink; cf. daze
 daun, dan: sir, a title of respect
 OF dan
 daunce sb. dance; olde daunce]
 old sport OF dance
 dauncen inf. dance; daunsith 3 pr.
 s.; daunsedyn 3 pt. pl. OF
 dancer
 daunger: peril, penalty, control,
 power OF dangier
 daungerous: masterful, threatening
 OF dangeros
 daunsedyn 3 pt. pl. danced; cf.
 dauncen
 daunsith 3 pr. s. dances; cf.
 dauncen
 daunsynge p. dancing
 daunte imp. s. rule; dauntist 2 pr.
 s. AF daunter
 dawe inf. dawn; daweth 3 pr. s.;
 dawed pp. AS dagian
 dawenyng sb. dawn, daybreak
 dawes: days AS dagas
 dayerye: dairy AS dāge "dairy-
 maid" + F. erie
 dayeseye, dayseie, dayesys, day-
 syes pl. daisy AS dāgesēge
 de Casibus Virorum Illustrium: on
 the falls of famous men (from
 good fortune), a work by Gio-
 vanni Boccaccio, upon which
 model the "Monkes Tale" is
 based
 de owter mere: from over sea, im-
 ported

debaat sb. contest, conflict OF debat
 debate inf. fight OF debatre
 debonaire a. gentle, gracious; as s. courteous person OF.
 debonairly: debonairely, graciously
 debonairete: gentleness, graciousness OF.
 declare inf. declare OF.
 declinacioun: angle of the sun in the ecliptic OF.
 ded, dede, deed a. dead, deadly; be deed] be slain AS *dēad*
 Dedalus: Dædalus, legendary artist and mechanician of Greece, chiefly noted for his attempt to fly by means of attached wings. Mentioned as a typical mechanician, whose mechanical skill cannot help the mourner
 dede: deed, act; with the dede] as soon as it is done AS *dæd f.*
 dede 3 pt. s. did; cf. doon
 dede pp. died; cf. dye
 dedely, dedly: deadly, mortal
 deduyt: delight OF *deduit*
 deedly: death-like
 deaf: deaf AS *dēaf*
 deel, del, dele: part, share AS *dæl m.*
 deelen inf. deal AS *dēalan*
 dees: dice OF *det*, pl. *dez*
 deeth sb. death; the death] the pestilence AS *dēað m.*
 defame sb. dishonor OF *defamer*
 defaulte: fault, check (hunting term); lack OF *defaute*
 deffenden inf. forbid OF *defendre*
 deffye, defye 1 pr. s. defy F *deffier*
 degree: rank in life, step OF.
 deiedyn 3 pt. pl. died; cf. dye
 deite, deitee: deity OF.
 deknes: deacons AS *deacon*
 del, dele: part, share; every del] wholly; never a dele] not a bit; cf. deel
 deliberacioun: deliberation OF *deliberation*
 delicaat: delicate, dainty Lat *delicatus*
 delicasye: wantonness, vain delight OF *delicacie*
 delices: delights Lat *deliciæ*

delit, delite sb. delight, pleasure OF *delit*
 delitable: delectable, pleasing OF.
 delite inf. delight OF *deleitier* 3 pr. s. *delite*
 delivere inf. free OF *delivrer*
 Delphos: acc. form of Delphi, famous for Apollo's temple
 delve inf. dig; dolven pp. AS *delfan*
 Delyt: pers. Delight; cf. *delit*
 delyvere a. active OF *delivre*
 delyvered pp. set free; cf. *delivere*
 delyverly: with dexterity
 demande s. question OF *demande*
 demen inf. imagine, judge, decide AS *dēman*
 Demetrius: king of the Parthians
 Demociones: of Demotion, a Greek
 demeyne: dominion OF *demaine*
 Demophoun: Demophoön; cf. Phyllis
 dempne 1 pr. s. despise, damn OF *dampner*
 demyn inf. deem, judge; cf. *demen*
 dennes pl. dens AS *denn n.*
 depardieux: in God's name
 departe inf. part, separate, leave; departen 1 pr. pl. OF *departir*
 departyng sb. departure
 depe a. deep AS *dēop*
 depe ad. deeply
 Depeford: Deptford, about three miles from Southwark
 depeynted pp. depicted OF *depeint*
 depper: deeper
 depryved pp. deprived OF *depriver*
 dere a. dear AS *dēore*
 dere ad. dearly
 dere inf. harm AS *derian*
 derke a. dark AS *deorc*
 derke sb. darkness
 derkeste: darkest
 derre: dearer
 Dertemouthe: Dartmouth, in Devonshire
 deryveth 3 pr. s. is derived OF *deriver*
 desclaundred pp. slandered OF *esclandre*

descresyoun: discretion OF discre-
 tion
 descripcioun, discripsioun: descrip-
 tion OF description
 desdeyn sb. disdain OF desdein
 desdeyne inf. disdain OF des-
 degnier
 desever: dissever, part OF des-
 severer
 deseyte: deceit OF deceite
 desir sb. desire OF.
 desire inf. desire OF desirer
 desirus, desirous a. desirous OF
 desiros
 desiryng: yearning
 desolat: dejected, weakest of in-
 fluence, forsaken OF.
 despenche: support OF dispense
 despendest 2 pr. s. wasteth OF
 despendre
 despeyred pp. sunk in despair OF
 desperer
 despit sb. spite, contempt, act of
 despite OF.
 despitous: merciless, contemptuous,
 angry OF despitous
 despitously: pitilessly
 displayeth 3 pr. s. displays OF
 desployer
 desport: amusement, sport; cf. OF
 se desporter
 destene: cf. disteyne
 destinee: destiny OF destinee
 destourbe inf. destourbe of] hinder
 in OF destourber
 destourbing: disturbance
 destreyneth 3 pr. s. oppresses OF
 destraindre
 destroubled pp. troubled, disturbed
 OF destroubler
 destroyeth: ruins OF destruire
 destruccioun: destruction OF des-
 truction
 Desyr: pers. Desire
 deth, dethe: death
 dette: debt OF dette
 detteles a. free from debt
 dettour: debtor OF.
 deve a. pl. deaf AS dēaf
 deuele way a. to the devil! AS
 dēofol
 devisioun: division, party; of my
 devisioun] under my influence
 OF division

devocioun: devotion OF devotion
 devoir: duty OF.
 devoutely: devoutly OF devote
 devyne inf. divine, predict OF
 deviner
 devys sb. device, direction OF
 devis m.
 devysen inf. imagine, tell; devyse
 1 pr. s. OF deviser
 dewe: dew AS dēaw m. and n.
 (wa- stem)
 dextrer: courser OF destrier
 dey, deye inf. die; deyde, deyede
 3 pt. Scan.
 deye: dairymaid AS dāge f.
 deyne inf. deign; deyned, deynid
 3 pt. s. refl. OF digner, deigne
 3 pr. s.
 deyng p. dying
 deyntee a. dainty, pleasant, high
 bred OF deintie
 deyntee sb. regard, estimation,
 desire; pl. dainties
 deyntevous: dainty
 deys sb. dais, platform OF deis
 Deyscorides: Dioscorides, Greek
 physician and botanist of the sec-
 ond century
 deyng: dying
 Dianira, Dianyre: Deianira, jilted
 by Hercules, sent him a poisoned
 shirt, which consumed him when
 put on
 dide 3 subj. did; cf. doon
 Dido: queen of Carthage, heroine
 of the "Æneid"
 diete sb. diet OF diete
 diffame: ill repute OF diffamer
 diffens: defence OF defense
 diffinioun: definite order Lat
 definition
 diffye inf. defy, despise F deffier
 diffyne inf. declare plainly OF
 definer
 diffynytyve: final, definite
 digestioun: digestion OF diges-
 tion
 digestyves: aids to digestion OF.
 dighte inf. prepare, serve, deco-
 rate; 3 pt. s.; dight pp. AS
 dihtan
 digne a. worthy, proud, distant
 OF.

dignitee: worth, rank, dignity OF
deintie Lat dignitas
dilatacioun: delay Lat dilatio
diocese: diocese OF diocese
Diogenes: Diogenes, Greek philosopher in Alexander's time
direct: directed Lat directus
dirke: dark AS deorc
dirkenesse: darkness
discensioun: dissension OF.
discerne inf. discern OF discerner
disceyvable: deceitful F decevable
dischevele: disheveled, disarranged, with hair flowing loosely OF descheveler
disconfiture: defeat OF.
disconftyng: discomfiture OF desconfit
discomfort: discomfort, discouragement OF desconfort
disconforten inf. discourage
discrecioun: discretion OF discretion
discret: discreet
discripsioun: description OF description
discryven inf. describe OF descrivre
discre inf. reveal, disclose OF descovrir
discussid: pp. discussed Lat discussus
disese: discomfort OF desaise
disespaiied pp. hopeless OF disespere
disfigurat: ugly OF desfigurer + Lat suff. atus
disfigure sb. deformity
disgyed pp. disguised OF desguiser
disherited pp. disinherited OF desheriter
dishobeysaunt: disobedient OF desobeir
dishonour sb. disgrace OF deshonneur
disjoynt sb. trouble OF desjoint
diskryve inf. describe; cf. discryve
dismalle s. unlucky day. Dismal comes through French from the Latin dies malus, evil day. Later the -al suffix caused it to be used as an adjective. The days

of the ten plagues of Egypt were considered as unlucky. Unlucky days were also called Ægyptiaci
disparage sb. disgrace OF desparager
disparaged pp. misallied
dispeir sb. despair OF despoir
dispenche: expenditure, extravagance OF dispense
dispend inf. spend OF dispendre < Lat.
dispensacioun: dispensation
dispeyred: despairing
dispise inf. despise OF despire
dispit sb. despite OF despit
dispitouse: cruel; cf. despitous OF despitous
dispitously ad. angrily
displesance, displesaunce: annoyance, displeasure OF desplaisance
displese inf. displease OF desplaisir
dispoillen inf. despoil OF despoillier
disport sb. sport OF.
disporte inf. amuse OF se desporter
disposed pp. in condition, health OF disposer
disposicioun: disposition, situation; character as determined by position of planet OF disposicion
disputisoun: dispute OF.
dissencioun: strife
disserved pp. deserved OF deservir
dissever inf. dissever, part OF dessevrer
dissimulour: dissimulate, liar OF dissimuler
dissymulynge: pretences
distaf: distaff AS distæf
disteyne, dysteyne inf. cf. destene bedim, take away the color of OF desteinde
distraynyth: clutches; cf. distreyne OF destrainde
distresse: distress, trouble, sorrow OF destrecier
distreyne inf. constrain
disturbaunce: trouble OF destourbance

divers, dyverse: different, changed OF.
 divinistre: diviner, prophet OF < deviner
 divisoun: distinction, sect OF division
 divisynge: devising
 divyn: divine OF divin
 diyng: dying
 do, doo, don, doon inf., imp. have, cause to be; cf. doon AS dōn
 doctour: doctor; doctour of Phisik] physician; Augustine, the "holy doctor" of the Middle Ages OF.
 doctrine: learning, instructive tales or speech OF.
 does sb. pl. does AS dā
 dogerel: doggerel < dog
 dogges: dogs AS dogga
 doghter: daughter; poss. daughter's AS dohtor
 doghty: strong, valiant AS dohtig
 doke: duck AS dūce f.
 dokked pp. cut close; cf. Icel dockr short tail
 dolven: buried; cf. delven
 dom, doom: judgment; to my dom] in my opinion AS dōm
 domesman: judge AS.
 dominacioun: control, power AS domination
 Donegild: mother of King Alla
 dong sb. manure; donge dat. AS dung
 donge inf. cover with manure
 dongeoun: 'dungeon, donjon OF donjon
 donghil: dunghill
 doom: judgment, decision; cf. dom
 doon, doone, done, doo, do inf. do, cause, make for; doon wrought] caused to be made; for to doone] proper; doth, dooth 3 pr. s.; dooth for to] causes to; doth me dye] slays me; don 2 pr. pl.; did, dede, dyd 3 pt. s.; did of] took off; dide 3 pr. subj.; done pp. AS dōn; cf. Appendix
 dore: door AS duru f.
 Dorigene: wife of Arveragus < Celt Drogen
 dormant: permanent; cf. table OF.
 dorste 3 pt. s. dared; cf. dar
 dotage: dotage, folly OF.

doted pp. doting OF doter
 doubelyth 3 pr. s. doubles OF dobler
 double: deceitful OF doble
 doughter: daughter AS dohtor
 doughtyr: daughter, Pleasure, daughter of Cupid
 doub a. dumb AS dumb
 doun ad. down AS of-dūne
 doune prep. down
 downward: downward
 doute sb. doubt, fear OF doute
 douteless: doubtless
 dowaire: dowry OF doaire
 dowbilnesse, dowblenesse: duplicity
 dower: dowry OF doaire
 downe sb. down, upland region AS dūn
 downe sb. down, soft feathers Icel dūnn
 dowve: dove (pigeon); dowvis pl. AS dūfe
 doynge: act, deed
 draf: refuse, chaff orig. uncert.
 dragoun: dragon (cited in Ecclesiasticus xxv. 16 Sk.) OF dragon
 drasty: filthy AS < dærstan + ig
 draughte: draught; move at chess AS dragan, "drow," "move"
 drawn inf. draw, incline, carry, bring, recall; drough, drow pt. s.
 drawe pp. drawn, moved in a game; drawe the same draught] made the same move AS dragan
 drecched pp. bored, troubled AS dreccean
 drede sb. fear, doubt, hesitation; withoute drede] doubtless, surely AS drædan
 drede inf. be afraid, fear; drede 1 pr. s.; dreddest 2 pt. s.; drad, dradde, dredde 3 pt. s.; dradden 3 pt. pl. subj.; drad pp. AS drædan
 dredeful: fearful, cautious
 drededes, dredles ad. without dread, fearlessly, certainly
 dreem, drem sb. dream AS drēam
 dreint 3 pt. s. drowned; cf. drenche AS drencan
 dremed 1 pt. s. dreamed
 dremyth 3 pr. s. dreameth

drenche inf. drown; dreint 3 pt. s.;
 dreynte pp. AS drencan
 drenchyng: drowning
 drery: dreary, sad AS drēorig
 dresse inf., 3 pr. pl. fit up; arrange, make ready OF dresser
 drewh 3 pt. s. drew, attracted
 drevyne pp. driven
 dreye: dry AS drȳge
 dreynte pp. drowned; cf. drenche
 drive inf. drive; drive away] pass away AS drifan
 drofe 3 pt. s. drove; cf. dryven
 drogges sb. pl. drugs OF drogue
 drogthe sb. drought, dryness AS drūgað
 dronkelewe: a drunkard, drunken + lāwe AS suff.
 dronken 1 pt. pl. drank; pp.; dronke pp. cf. drynken
 dronkenesse: drunkenness
 drope sb. drop AS dropa m.
 droppyng: leaking
 drough 3 pt. s. drew; cf. drawe
 drouped 3 pt. pl. drooped Icel drūpa
 draw pt. s. drew, drew near; cf. drawn
 drugge inf. drudge orig. uncert.; cf. AS drēogan
 drye a. dry, dried up, wizened; drye sel; cf. Carrenare AS drige
 drye 1 pr. s., 3 pt. pl. endure AS drēogan
 drynke sb. drink AS drincan
 drynken inf. drink; dronken pt. pl., pp; dronke pp.
 dryve inf. drive, compel; drofe 3 pt. s.; dryven pp. AS drifan
 duc: duke OF.
 duchesse: duchess OF.
 duel, duelle inf. dwell, remain; cf. dwelle AS dwellan
 duetee: duty AF duete
 duewe: due OF deu; cf. deue
 dul, dulle a. dull; cf. AS dol
 dulnesse: dullness
 Dun is in the Myre: an old game; serving-men attempting to drag the "horse" (a log of wood) along a kitchen floor. Dun = The dun horse
 Dunmowe: a village in Essex, where a flitch of bacon was yearly

offered to the couple who could prove their first year and day of marriage happily spent
 dunne a. dun, dark AS dunn
 duracioun: duration OF duration
 dure inf. endure, last OF durer
 durst, durste 1 pr. s., pt. s. subj., dare; cf. dar
 duszeyne: dozen OF dosaine
 dwellen inf. 3 pr. pl. dwell, delay; dwelled, dwelte 3 pt. s. AS dwellan
 dwellynge sb. residence
 dyademe: diadem, crown OF diademe
 dyamauntz: diamonds OF diamant
 Dyane: Diana, goddess of chastity and of hunting
 dyapred pp. diversified with figures OF diapré
 dych sb. ditch AS dic, dat. dice
 dyched pp. ditched, moated
 dyd pt. s. did; cf. doon
 dyde 3 pr. s. subj. should die; cf. dye
 Dydo: Dido of Carthage, who slew herself for grief and anger when her lover, Æneas, secretly deserted her
 dye inf. die; dyde, dyed pt. s.; deiedyn 3 pt. pl.; dede pp. Icel deyja
 dye 3 pr. pl. dye; dyed 3 pt. s., pp. AS dēagian
 dyere: dyer
 dyke inf. ditch AS dic
 dynt: stroke AS dynt
 dys pl. dice OF det, pl. dez
 dyvers, dyverse a. diverse, various
 dyvded pp. divided
 dyvyne a. divine
 dyvynyng p. foretelling
 dyvynys: divines, theologians

E

ealyth 3 pr. s. ails AS eglan
 ease inf. ease OF aise
 eate inf. eat AS etan
 ebbe sb. ebb-tide AS ebba
 ebbe inf. ebb AS ebbian
 Ebrayk: Hebrew OF ébraïque
 Ebrew: Hebrew
 ebrought pp. brought; cf. brynge

Ecclesiaste: Ecclesiastes, a book of the Bible (xxv. 25)

Ecclesiaste: Ecclesiasticus, one of the books of the Apocrypha (xii. 10)

ecclesiaste: prelate OF.

ech, eche a. each; **ech a]** every AS *ælc*

echon: each one, each

Eclympasteyre: son of the god of sleep

ecome pp. come

Ecquo: Echo, who fell in love with Narcissus. When he slighted her love, she pined away until only her voice was left

Ector: Hector, son of King Priam of Troy, chief fighter on the Trojan side

edrawe pp. drawn

eek, eke, ek: eke, also AS *ēac*

eelde, elde: age, time AS *ældu*, *yldu*

eere pl. ears AS *ēare n.*

eerly: early AS *ærlice*

eeste: east AS *ēast*

effect: fact AF.

eft, efte ad. again, another time AS *eft*

eft-soones: eftsoon, again AS *eft* + *sōna*

Egeus: king of Athens and father of Theseus

egge: edge AS *ecg f.*

eggement: egging

Egipcien: Egyptian

Egipte: Egypt

egle: eagle; **eglis pl.** AF *egle*

ego pp. gone

egre: sour, bitter, sharp AF *egre*

eighe: eye AS *ēage n.*

eightetethe: eighteenth

eir: air OF *air*

ek: eke, also; cf. *eek*

Ekko; cf. *Ecquo*

eknowe pp. known

elde: age; cf. *eelde*

eldres pl. ancestors AS *yidra*

eleccioun: selection OF *election*

element: element. In Chaucer's time all matter was thought to be composed of the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water OF.

elenge: tedious, unendurable AS *ælenge*

Eleyne: Helen, wife of Menelaus of Sparta. She was seduced by Paris, q. v., and this caused the Trojan war

elf: sprite, witch AS *ælf*

elf-queene: fairy queen

Eliachim: priest of Bethulia

Elicon: Mt. Helicon, confused with some fountain sacred to Apollo (Hippocrene, Castalia)

elis: eels AS *æl m.*

ellas: alas! cf. F *helas*

ellebor: hellebore, an herb OF *ellebore*

elles, ellis: else AS *elles*

eloquence: eloquence OF.

Elpheta: wife of Cambyskan

elves; cf. *elf*

elvyssh: elf-like, reserved, shy

embassadour: ambassador OF.

embassadrye: diplomacy OF.

embosed pp. embossed, plunged into the thick woods OF *embosquer*

embrace inf. hold OF *embracer*

embrouded pp. embroidered OF *enbroder*

Emeleward: toward Aemilia, district in N. Italy

Emelye: sister of Hippolyta

emeraude, emerode: emerald MF *esmeraude*

Emetreus: king of India, who fought with Arcita

emforth prep. to the extent of AS *em* = *efen* + *forð*

emperesse, emperice, emperise, emperisse: empress OF.

emperoures pl. emperors OF *empereor*

empoysoned pp. poisoned OF *empoissoner*

empoysonere: poisoner

empoysonyng sb. poisoning

emprenteth 2 imp. pl. imprint; **emprented pp.** OF *empreindre*

cmprentyng sb. impression

emprise: enterprise, undertaking OF *emprise*

enbaumme: embalm OF *embaumer*

enbrace inf. embrace; **enbraceth pr. s.** OF *embrace*

encens sb. incense OF.
 encense inf. cast incense
 enchaînement s. enchantment OF.
 encheson: occasion, reason OF
 enchaïson
 enclyne inf. bow, stimulate;
 enclyned pp. inclined OF
 encliner
 encomberous: burdensome < OF
 encombrance
 encombred pp. encumbered, caught
 OF encombrer
 encrees sb. increase AF encrestre
 encrese inf. increase; encreseth,
 encresseseth 3 pr. s.; encresede 3
 pt. s.; encressed pp.
 ende: end AS ende m.
 endelees: endless
 endelong ad. lengthwise, along
 endelong prep. along
 endere sb. ender
 endite inf. write, compose OF
 enditer
 endure inf. endure, live OF
 endurer
 endytyng: mode of writing
 Eneas: Æneas, hero of the Æneid
 of Virgil; cf. Dido
 enemyte: enmity AF enemite
 Eneydos: the Æneid (quoted in
 gen. case)
 enforce inf. strengthen OF en-
 forcer
 enformed pp. informed OF en-
 former
 enfortuned: devised OF enfortu-
 ner
 engendre inf. procreate, produce;
 engendred 3 pt. pl.; engendred
 pp.; engenderede, engendrid OF
 engendrur
 engendrure: propagation OF.
 engin: skill, genius OF.
 Englis, Englissh: English
 engyn: machine OF engin
 engyned pp. tortured
 enhauncen inf. raise, promote;
 enhaunsed pp. OF enhancier
 enhorte inf. exhort OF enhorter
 enlumyned 3 pt. s. illumined OF
 enluminer
 enoynt pp. anointed OF enoint
 pp.

enquere inf. inquire OF enquerre
 enquerynge: inquiry
 ensample: example, sample OF
 ensample
 ensure inf. pledge, engage one's
 self, take security for OF en +
 seür
 entencioun: intention OF enten-
 tion
 entende inf. give attention to,
 strive OF entendre
 entent, entente: intent, intention,
 will; doo thyn entent] be intent,
 give heed; in good entente] with
 resignation OF entent
 entewnes pl. tunes OF entones
 entirmes: entremet, dish served
 between courses OF entremet
 entirmetyn: (of) middle, mix one's
 self (in); cf. entremette
 entraille: entrails OF.
 entre inf. enter OF entrer
 entree: entrance OF entre
 entremette inf. interrupt OF
 entremettre
 entrikyth pr. s. snares OF
 entriquier
 entuned pp. intoned OF entoner
 entytlt pp. entitled F en + title
 envynyme inf. poison OF en-
 venimer
 enveloped pp. enveloped, en-
 wrapped OF enveloper
 envye sb. envy, hatred OF envie
 envye inf. vie, strive, envy OF
 envie
 envyned pp. stored with wine
 F enyne
 envyous: envious OF envios
 eny: any AS ænig
 eonde 1 pr. s. end; cf. ende
 Epicurus: Greek philosopher, whose
 doctrine was that pleasure is the
 chief good in life
 Epistelle of Ovyde: Ovid's "Epi-
 stolæ," or Heroides, a series of
 poetical letters supposedly ad-
 dressed by unfortunate women
 to their lovers
 equacions: equations, exact quan-
 tities Lat æquationem
 equynoxial: equinoxial circle F.
 equitee: equity, fairness OF equite

er conj. ere, before; **er that:** before AS *ær*
er prep. before
er, ere sb. ear; ear (of corn) AS *ear* n.
erande: errand AS *ærende* n.
erbe: herb F *herbe*
erber: arbor OF *herbier*
erchedekenes poss. archdeacon; *erchedekenes curs*] excommunication; *purs* is the *erchedekenes helle*] the archdeacon would punish him in his purse; i.e., he could avoid the curse by giving money *arch* + AS *deacon*
Ercules: Hercules, famed for his feats of strength. He rescued Alcestes from Hades
ere inf. plough AS *erian*
eresye: heresy OF *heresie*
Eriphilem: acc. case of *Eriphyle*, wife of *Amphiaraus*
erl: earl AS *eorl*
erly ad. early AS *ærlíce*
erme inf. feel pain, grieve AS *yrman*
Ermony: Armenia
Ermy: Armenian
ernewest sb. a serious matter; *ernewest of game*] seriousness out of sport AS *eornost*
errante, erraunt a. wandering, stray; near middle of chess-board OF *errant*
Erro: Hero; cf. *Leandre*
errour: error, doubt OF.
erst: first, at first AS *ærest*
ert: art
erthe: earth AS *eorðe* f.
erthely: earthly
erys pl. ears AS *ære*
escapen inf. escape AF *escaper*
eschaunge sb. exchange; in *eschaunge shuldes selle*] profit by the different rates of exchange in the different money-markets OF *eschange*
eschue inf. eschew, shun AF *eschuer*
Esculapius: the Greek god of medicine, son of *Apollo*
ese sb. ease OF *aíse*
ese inf. ease, help, accommodate,

compensate; *esed atte beste*] given the best possible service
esily ad. with ease
espye sb. spy OF *espíe*
espye inf. spy, find out OF *espíer*
est, eest sb. east; ad. eastward
estaat, estat: estate, rank, dignity, condition OF *estat*
estatlich a. stately
estaty ad. with dignity
Ester: Esther
Estoryal Myroure: *Speculum Historiale* of *Vincent*, q. v.
estres: parts, nature OF *estre* "to be," then "state," "part," "division"
estward: eastward
esy: easy, mild OF *aisié*
ete inf. eat; *etyn* 3 pr. pl.; *cet* 3 pt. s. ate; *ete, eten* pp. AS *etan*
eterne a. eternal OF.
Etike: the "Ethics" of Aristotle, in which virtue is represented as a mean between two extremes (Sk.)
etyn 3 pr. pl. eat
Eva: Eve
Evangeliset: Evangelist, writer of Gospel
evaungiles: The Gospels OF *evan-gile*
eve: evening AS *ēfen*
evel ad. ill AS *yfel*
even, evene ad. exactly, cautiously; *bere even*] act with moderation; *ful even*] actually AS *efen*
evene a. equal, well-matched, ordinary, full
even-song: evening prayer; if *even-song* and *morwe-song* accorded] if in the morning you agree to the evening's plan
eventyde: evening
ever: ever; *evere in oon*] altogether; *ever leng the worse*] the worse the longer it hangs; *evere lenger the more*] the longer, the more AS *æfre*
everech: each one; cf. *everich*
everemoore: evermore
everich, everiche: every one, each AS *æfre* + *æl*

evermo: evermore, constantly
 ever + mo
 everychon: every one
 everydel, everydelle: entirely, completely
 everylyche: constantly ME ever
 + ylike, AS gelice
 ew: yew-tree AS iw
 ewysse: I wis
 exaltacioun: sign in which a star
 has greatest power for good or
 ill OF exaltation
 exaltat pp. raised in zodiacal
 sign Lat.
 exametron: hexameter Lat.
 excuse inf. pardon OF.
 execucioun, execussyoun: execu-
 tion OF execution
 exemple sb. example OF ex-
 ample
 exercise inf. exercise OF excer-
 cice
 expans yeeris: anni expansi, a
 term for separate numbers of
 years below twenty, in tables
 experience: proof, example OF.
 expowne inf. explain
 expres: expressly OF.
 expresse inf. 3 pr. pl. express
 < expres
 expulsif: expellent; cf. vertu OF.
 extenden 3 pr. pl. are extended
 Lat extendere
 extorcioun: extortion OF extor-
 sion
 ey: egg AS æg n. pl. ægru
 eye: eye; eyen pl.; at eye] at a
 glance AS ēage n.
 eyleth 3 pr. s. ails AS eglan
 eyr: air OF air
 eyre: heir, son OF heir
 eyther, eythir: either AS ægþer

F

fables: stories OF.
 face: a division of the signs of
 the zodiac in mediæval astrology
 facoun: falcon OF faucon
 facound, facounde sb. eloquence
 Lat facundus a.
 facound a. ready, fluent Lat
 facundus
 facultee sb. ability F faculte
 fader, fadre: father, ancestor,

patriarch; father's poss.; fader
 kyn] father's family AS fæder
 fadme pl. fathoms AS fæðm
 faile sb. failure, fail F faillir
 faillen inf. fail; failed 3 pt. s.
 fair, faire a. fair; as sb. a fair
 part; a fair] an excellent speci-
 men AS fæger
 faire ad. fairly, well
 fairer: more fair
 fairnesse, fairenesse sb. square
 living, uprightness; swiche a
 fairenesse of a nekke] a neck of
 such fairness
 Fairye: Faerie, Fairyland
 fal sb. fall
 fal inf. fall; cf. falle
 faldyng sb. coarse cloth, frieze
 falle inf. fall, happen, prosper,
 belong to; falleth, fallys 3 pr. s.;
 falleth in my thoght] comes to
 my mind; fel 3 pt. s.; fil, fille
 pt.; falle 3 pr. s. subj.; falle pp.;
 AS feallan Icel falla
 falow: yellow, pallid AS fealu
 fals a. false OF fals
 falsen inf. be false to, betray, lie
 falsely: falsely
 faltren: falter; orig. uncert.
 falwes: soft, fallow fields AS
 fealgas "harrows"
 famulier: familiar OF familier
 fan: the quintain was pivoted; its
 two parts were the "fan" or
 "board" (shield), and the
 "club" or "bag." The tilter, on
 striking the board, had to
 dodge the swing of the bag
 which followed AS fann
 fantasye, fantesye sb. desire, fan-
 tasy OF fantasie
 fantome: fantastic vision OF fan-
 tosmé
 fare sb. conduct, proceeding,
 business; evil fare] ill hap, mis-
 fortune AS faru "journey" f.
 fare inf. fare, prosper, behave,
 proceed; faren 1 pr. pl.; ferde,
 ferden pt. s., pl.; fare pp. AS
 faran
 farewel, farwel: farewell
 farsed pp. stuffed F farce
 faste ad. rapidly, fast; faste by]
 near by AS fæste

faste 1 pr. s. fast AS *fæstan*
 fastynge s. fasting
 fattyssh: fat, plump
 faucon: falcon; faucon peregryn]
 peregrine falcon OF *faucon*
 fauconers: falconers
 faught 3 pt. s. fought; cf. fighte
 fauned 3 pt. s. fawned on AS
fagnian
 fawe: fain, glad AS *fægen*
 fawnes: fauns Lat *faunus*
 fayerye: fairies, Fairyland OF
færie "enchantment"
 fayle inf. fail; cf. *faillen*
 fayn a. glad AS *fægen*
 fayne ad. gladly; han fayn] fain
 have
 fayner a. gladder; ad. more gladly
 fayneste: gladdest
 faynte inf. faint; feyntest 2 pr. s.;
 OF *feint* pp. of *feindre*
 fayr ad. well
 fayre sb. fair AS *fæger*
 fayrest: fairest, most beautiful
 feble: feeble AF *feble*
 fecchen inf. take, bring; fette 3
 pt. s.; fet pp. AS *fecc(e)an*
 fedde 3 pt. s. fed AS *fēdan*
 feder: feather; federys pl. AS
feðer
 fedme pl. fathoms AS *fæðm*
 fee: pay; fee symple] estate free
 from any limitation or entail
 AF *fee*
 feeld: field; feeldes pl. the field
 or background of banner or
 arms; feeld of snow, etc.] Bert-
 rand du Guesclin, constable of
 France, bore in his coat-of-
 arms a black eagle, upon a silver
 field ("feeld of snow") with a
 red band ("lymerod") across the
 whole, from left to right AS
feld m.
 feelyngly: sympathetically
 feend: fiend AS *fēond m.*
 feendly: fiendish
 feendlych: fiendish
 feere sb. fear AS *fær*
 feere sb. mate; in feere] with each
 other AS *gefēra m.*
 feeste: merriment; cf. feste OF
feste
 feestlych: fond of feasts

feet: feats, acts AF *fet*
 feith: faith OF *fei* + -th (cf.
 truth)
 feithful: faithful
 fel, felle a. evil, cruel OF *fel*
 fel 3 pt. s. fell; cf. falle
 felawe sb. fellow, chum Icel
fēlagi m.
 felaweshipe: fellowship, company
 felde: field; feldys pl.; cf. feeld
 feldefare: fieldfare, a kind of
 thrush ME *felde* + *fare*
 feldyn: 2 pt. pl. felt; cf. felen
 fele a. many AS *fela*
 fele inf. feel; feled 3 pt. s.;
 feldyn 2 pt. pl. AS *fēlan*
 felicitee: happiness OF.
 felle inf. fell, cut down; fild pp.
 AS *fellan*
 felonye: felony, crime OF *felonie*
 felowe: fellow; cf. felawe
 felynge: feeling, fancy, sensitive-
 ness, passion, artistic skill
 feelyngly: feelingly
 felysshyppe: company, gathering
 Femenye: the country of the
 Amazons
 femynynytee: feminine form F
femininite
 fen: fann (Arab.) a branch of
 science; part of Avicenna's
 "canon"
 fendely: fiendlike, devilish
 Fenix: phoenix, a fabulous bird
 which every 500 years burned
 itself on the altar and rose again
 from the ashes young and beau-
 tiful
 fer a., ad. far; fer ne ner] neither
 more nor less AS *feor*
 ferbrond: firebrand AS *fȳr n.* +
 AS *brand*
 ferde pt. s. prospered, went; cf.
 fare
 fere, feere sb. fear AS *fær*
 fere, feere sb. mate in fere
 together
 fered pp. frightened
 ferforth: far, forward
 ferforthly: thoroughly
 fermacies: pharmacies, remedies
 OF *farmacie*
 ferme sb. rent, payment; he
 "farmed" the revenues of his dis-

istrict, so that no one else begged
 in his district F ferme
 ferme a. firm OF ferme
 fermour: farmer, collector of taxes
 fern: long time AS feorran
 fern asshen: fern ashes, used as
 alkali in mediæval glass AS
 fearn
 ferne: distant (pl. of ferren) AS
 feorran
 Ferrare: Ferrara
 ferre, ferrer ad. further AS
 feorran
 ferreste a. most remote
 fers: the piece at chess next to
 the king, which we call the
 queen, but which was originally
 the Pherz, which in Persian
 signifies the chief counsellor.
 The loss of the queen for noth-
 ing generally means the loss of
 the game; ferses twelve] not
 twelve queens; here fers is used
 to mean all the pieces save the
 king; the bishop, knight and
 rook counting but one apiece
 OF fierce
 ferst: first AS fyrst
 ferthe: fourth AS fēorða
 farther, farther: farther; cf.
 AS furðor
 ferthyng: farthing AS fēorðung
 fesaunt: pheasant AF fesaunt
 fest: fist AS fýst f.
 feste sb. feast; festys pl. OF
 feste
 festei yng: feasting, entertaining
 OF festeier
 festeth 3 pr. s. feasts
 festne inf. fasten AS fæstan
 fet, fete sb. pl. feet AS fēt
 fet pp. fetched; cf. fecchen
 fethere: feather AS feðr
 fethered 3 pt. s. feathered
 fetisly: neatly, correctly OF fetis,
 faitis
 fette 3 pt. s. fetched, brought; cf.
 fecchen
 fettred 3 pt. s. fettered, put in
 chains AS fetor
 fettres pl. fetters
 fetys: neat, well-shaped OF fetis
 fevere terciane: tertian fever, with

rise of temperature every other
 day AS fēfor
 fewe pl. few AS fēawe
 fey: faith; in good feyl i' faith
 OF fey
 feyne ad. gladly AS fægen
 feyne: feign, pretend, speak false-
 ly; feyned pp. OF feindre,
 feign-ant
 feyntest: makest faint; cf. faynte
 feyntynge: fainting, failing
 feynynge s. pretence
 feyrenesse: beauty
 feythe: faith OF fei + th; cf.
 truth
 fieble: feeble AF feble
 fiers, fiese: fierce OF fiers
 fifte, fifthe: fifth AS fifta
 fighte inf. fight; fyght 3 pr. s.;
 faught 3 pt. s.; foghten 3 pt. pl.,
 pp. AS feohtan
 figure: shape, figure; figuris pl.
 figures; figuris ten] the ten
 Arabic numerals F figure
 figurynge sb. form, figure
 fikulnesse: fickleness AS ficol
 fil, fille pt. fell, happened; cf.
 falle
 fild pp. felled; cf. felle
 fild pp. filled
 fille sb. fill AS fyllo, -u f.
 filthe: filth AS fylð f.
 finde: find, discover, invent, fur-
 nish; fynd, fynt pr. s.; fond,
 foond, founde 1, 3 pt. s.; founde
 pp.; fynde 3 pr. s. subj. AS
 findan
 fir, fire: fire AS fýr n.
 firi a. fiery
 firmament: sky, heaven Lat
 firmamentum
 firre: fir-tree; cf. Icel fura
 firste table: the first of the ten
 commandments refers to God
 fry: fiery
 fissh: fish AS fisc
 fissher: fisherman
 fit: a portion of a song AS fit
 fithele: fiddle AS fīðele
 fixe pp. fixed OF fixe
 flambe: flames OF flambe, flame
 flater 1 pr. s. flatter; cf. Ger.
 flattern, F flatter
 flaterye: flattery OF flaterie

flaterý, flateýrynge sb. flatter-
 ing
 flatour: flatterer OF.
 flatte: flat Icel flatr
 flaugh 2 pt. s. flewest; cf. flee
 flaume: flame OF flame
 Flaundres: Flanders, a district
 now forming parts of France,
 Holland and Belgium
 Flaundryssh a. Flemish
 fle, fleen inf. flee, escape; fledde
 3 pt. s.; fleeth imp. pl.; fled pp.;
 AS flēon
 fledde 3 pt. s.; cf. flee
 flee inf. fly; flaugh 2 pt. s.; fleigh,
 fly 3 pt. s.; flownen 3 pt. pl. AS
 flēogan
 fleemeth 3 pr. s. banisheth;
 fledmed pp. AS flēman
 fleen sb. pl. fleas AS flēa m. (-n)
 fleete, flete inf. float, swim; flete
 1 pr. s.; fleteth pr. s.; fleete
 3 pr. s. subj. AS flēotan
 fleeth imp. pl. flee; cf. fle
 fleight 3 pt. s. flew; cf. flee
 flekked pp. spotted; cf. Icel
 flekke
 fledmed pp. banished AS flēman
 femere: banisher
 Flemýng: Fleming, native of
 Flanders
 fien inf. flee; cf. fle
 flēs sb. fleece AS flēos
 flessh sb. flesh, meat AS flāsc n.
 fleshly ad. in the flesh, carnal
 flesshy: fleshy
 flek inf., 1 pr. s. float, swim; cf.
 fleete
 fletýnge p. floating
 flex sb. flax AS fleax n.
 fleýnge p. flying; cf. flee
 flickerynge p. flickering AS flice-
 rain
 flo: arrow AS flā f(-n)
 flok sb. flock AS flocc m.
 flokmeele: in a flock, in troops
 Flora: Goddess of flowers
 floryn: florin, a coin OF florin <
 Flofence
 flotery: fluttering, unkempt < AS
 floterian
 flour: flower; flourys pl.; flour
 delys] fleur de lis, lily OF flour
 flourethe 3 pr. s. blooms, flour-

ishes; floure 3 pr. s. subj.;
 floured 3 pt. s.
 flourouns: little flowers, florets
 floury: flowery
 flownen 3 pt. pl. flew; cf. flee
 floytynge p. playing the flute OF
 flauter
 fly 3 pt. s. flew; cf. flee
 flye sb. fly AS flēogé f.
 flynt: flint AS flint
 flyttynge p. fleeting, transitory,
 of little value
 fneseth 3 pr. s. puffs AS gefnē-
 san
 fnorteth 3 pt. s. snoreth < AS
 fnēosan (wk. grade)
 fodder is now forage: my prov-
 ender is provided for me, as
 hay for a horse in winter AS
 fōdder
 foghten 3 pt. pl. fought; cf. fighte
 fol, fole sb. fool OF fol
 fol a. foul AS fūl
 folde sb. fold; metaphor for par-
 ish AS fald
 folely, folily: foolishly
 folie: folly OF.
 folk, folke: folk, people, company
 AS folc n.
 folwen inf. follow; folwe pr. s.;
 folwen pr. pl.; folwed, folowed
 3 pt. s.; folowed wel] was a
 natural consequence; folwyng
 p. AS folgian
 folý, folýe sb. folly, foolishness
 folý ad. foolishly
 fomy a. foaming < AS fām
 fon pl. foes AS fā m.
 fond, fonde 1 pt. s. found; cf.
 finde
 fonde inf. attempt, sound, try out
 AS fandian
 fonge inf. receive, take AS fōn
 fontstoon: font
 foo: foe AS fā m.
 foole: fool; foolys pl. OF fol
 foolhardynesse: foolhardiness; pers.
 Pf 227
 foom, fome: foam AS fām n.
 foomen: foes
 foond 1 pt. s. found; cf. finde
 foore: track, way, steps < AS
 fōr f. journey
 foot-hoot: foot-hot, speedily

foot-mantel: an outer skirt to protect the gown when riding horse-back
 for conj. for, because, in order that AS.
 for prep. for, for the sake of, for fear of, in spite of, as far as concerns
 for al: notwithstanding
 for river: to the river
 forage: winter food, hay; cf. fodder OF fourage
 forbede, forbedeth 3 pr. s. forbiddeth; forbede imp.; forbode pp. AS forbēodan
 forbere inf. refrain from, forbear; forbereth imp. pl. AS forberan
 for blak: very black
 forbode sb. Goddis forbode] [it is] God's forbidding, God forbid! AS forbod
 forbode pp. forbidden; cf. forbede
 forbrused: badly bruised
 forby ad. past
 fordoon inf. render vain, destroy; fordo pp. AS fordōn
 for-dronken pp. very drunk
 fordryed: dried up
 foresterys pl. foresters F forestier
 foreward sb. agreement AS foreweard
 forfered: greatly frightened
 forgate, forgete pt. s. forgot; cf. foryete
 forgotten pp. forgotten; cf. foryete
 forgoon inf. forego, give up; forgo pp. lost AS foregān
 forheed: forehead AS forhēafod
 forkerveth 3 pr. s. hews in pieces
 forkutteth 3 pr. s. cuts to pieces
 forlete inf. lose, give up AS forlætan
 forleygne: the recall note, sounded when the hounds are off the trail OF for(s)loignier "leave far behind"
 forlorn pp. lost AS forloren
 forme sb. form; in form] with propriety
 forme inf. form; formed to 3 pt. s. formed so as to be
 formel, formele: female bird

former: early; former age: olden time
 formere: creator
 formest a. foremost
 forncast: provided
 forneys sb. furnace
 fornicacioun: fornication
 for old: with age
 forpampred: over-pampered
 forpynd pp. tormented, wasted away
 fors: force; no fors] no matter; no fors of] no matter about; I do no fors] I regard not
 forseyde pp. aforesaid
 forslawthen inf. waste idly
 forsok pp. forsook
 forsothe: verily
 forster: forester
 forswerynges: forswearing
 forth, forthe: forth, onward
 forther: further AS forðor
 forthermoor: further on
 fortherover: moreover
 fortheryng: furthering
 forthren inf. further, assist
 forthright: straightforward
 forthward: forward
 forthy: therefore
 Fortune: the goddess of fortune
 fortunen inf. give fortune; fortunē the ascendent] choose a fortunate ascendent; fortunest 2 pr. s.; fortunēd 3 pt. pl. happened; fortunēd pp.; gifted by Fortune CM 180
 for-waked pp. wearied out by watching
 forward: agreement
 forweped pp. worn out with weeping
 forwery: very weary
 forwes: furrows
 for-why conj. ad. wherefor, why, because
 forwityng: prescience, foreknowledge
 forwoot 3 pt. s. foreknew
 forwrapped pp. wrapped up
 foryelde inf. requite, repay
 foryete inf. forget; forgate, forgete pt. s.; forgotten, foryeten pp.
 foryetful: forgetful

foryeve inf. forgive; foryeve 3 imp. s., imp. pl.; foryevith imp. pl.; foryevyn, foryive pp.
 fostred 3 pt. s., pp. fostered, brought up
 fote: foot; fote hotel] foot hot, right away
 fother: cart-load AS foðor
 foughte 3 pt. pl. fought; foughten 3 pt. pl., pp.
 foul sb. bird; smale foules] song birds AS fugl
 foul a. evil, dangerous AS fül
 foule ad. foully
 foulere: fowler
 founde pt. s., pp.; found; cf. finde
 foundred 3 pt. s. stumbled
 founes pl. fawns, bucks in the first year
 foure: four
 foure and twenty: John of Gaunt was really 29. It is suggested that some scribe read xxviiiij as though it were xxiiij
 fourneys: furnace
 fourteenyght: fortnight, two weeks
 fourty: forty
 fowel: bird; smale foweles] song birds
 fownde pp. found; cf. finde
 foyne imp. let him thrust; foyneþ 3 pr. s.; foynen 3 pr. pl.
 foyson: abundance
 frakenes: freckles; cf. Icel frelknur
 fram: from AS.
 franchise: liberality, nobleness OF.
 frankeleyn: the franklins were well-to-do farmers, householders; in social rank inferior to the knights, yet having certain dignities AF fraunkelayn
 fraternitee sb. guild OF.
 fraught pp. lade
 Fraunceys Petrarch: Francesco Petrarch [1304-1374] one of the greatest of Italian poets, best known for his sonnets to Laura. He lived at Arquà, two miles from Padua
 frayneth 3 pr. s. prays AS fregnan
 fre, free a. free, gracious, liberal AS frêo

fredam, fredome: generosity AS frêodôm
 freend, frend: friend AS frêond n.
 frendlich a. friendly
 freeten 3 pr. pl. devour; cf. freten AS fretan
 freletee: frailty OF frailete
 frely: freely
 fremde: strange AS fremde
 frend sb. friend; cf. freend
 frendely a. friendly
 frendly ad. friendly
 frendshipe: friendship AS frêond-scipe
 Frenssh: French
 frere: friar OF.
 fresche, freshe, fressh: fresh, bright, lively, frank OF fres, f. fresche
 fressher a. fresher, brighter
 fresshly newe: unwearyingly
 fret: gold band, ornament OF frete
 freten inf. devour; freeten 3 pr. pl.; frete pp. AS fretan
 freut: fruit OF fruit
 freyned pp. asked AS frêgnan
 Friday: Venus' day (vendredi)
 Frise: Holland, Friesland, country of the Frisians
 fro ad. fro Icel frâ
 fro prep. from
 frosche: fresh OF fresche f.
 frothen 3 pr. pl. froth, foam Icel froða
 fructes: fruits Lat fructum
 fructife: come to fruition, bear fruit Lat.
 fructuous: fruitful, full of meat Lat.
 frutesteres: fruit-girls
 fruyt: fruit, prize
 frye inf. fry, burn OF frire
 ful a. full; atte fulle] completely AS.
 ful ad. fully, completely
 ful dryve: settled
 fulfild pp. filled full AS fulfyllan
 fulle a. full; cf. ful
 fulliche: fully
 fullonge: long
 fulsomnesse: over-abundance

fume: the distillation of substance
in the body OF fum
fumetere: fumitory, earth-smoke,
an herb OF fume-terre
fumositee: fumes (of wine)
furiat: dreadful, as by furies op-
pressed Lat furialis
furie: monster, Fury OF.
furlong wey: a short distance, or
time, a while AS furlang
furste: first; cf. firste
further over: moreover
fustian: strong cloth OF fustaine
fuyr: fire AS fȳr n.
fy interj. fie! (with stronger sense
than now) F fil
fyght 3 pr. s. fighteth; cf. fighte
fyle sb. file AS fēol, Merc. fil f.
fyled pp. filed
fylthe: filth AS fȳlð f.
fyn, fyne sb. end, purpose OF fin
fynaly: once for all
fynch sb. finch, a small bird, a
mistress AS finc
fynde a tale: think up something
to say; cf. finde
fynder: discoverer
fyne inf. finish (followed by in-
finitive)
fyne a. fine; fyne of ground] of
fine texture OF fin
fyneste a. finest
fyngerynge: fingering (of strings)
fyngres: fingers AS finger
fynns: fins AS finn
fynt 3 pr. s. finds; cf. finde
Fynystere: the Cape of Finistere,
western France
fyr: fire; pyre A 2914 AS fȳr
fyr: fir; cf. fir
fyr-reed a. fiery-red
fyrst: first
Fyssh: Pisces, a zodiacal sign, the
"exaltation" of Venus

G

gabbe: talk idly OF gaber
gadereth 3 pr. s. gathers; gadered,
gadrede pt.; cf. Du gaderen
gaf 3 pt. s. gave; cf. yeven
gaitrys berys: "goat-berries," of
the buckthorn (Sk.) AS < gāte-
trēow, goat-tree

galauntyn: a sauce F galantine
galaxye: the Milky Way F gal-
axie
gale inf. sing out AS galan
galentyne: a sauce for fowl F
galantine
Galgopheye: perhaps Gargaphie,
where Actæon was turned into
a stag
Galianes: "Galens," probably an
(intentional?) error of the Host,
who thought Galen, like Hippoc-
rates, must have some medicine
named for him
Galice: Galicia, a province in
Spain, the seat of the shrine of
St. James (Santiago) of Compo-
stella
Galien: Gallienus, emperor of Rome
before Claudius II
galle sb. gall; pl. feelings of
spleen, discord AS gealla m.
galle sb. sore spot OF galle
galoch: shoe OF.
galon wyn: gallon of wine OF
galon
galpyng: gaping, yawning; cf. Du
galpen "cry"
galwes: gallows AS galga
Galyen: Galen, a celebrated physi-
cian of the second century, whose
books were considered for four-
teen centuries the highest author-
ity on medicine
galyngale sb. a spice of the cy-
perus root F galingal
game sb. game, sport, pleasure,
jest AS gamen
gamed pt. s. impers. it pleased
gan pt. s. began; cf. ginne
Ganelon: one of the knights of
Charlemagne, whose treachery
caused the destruction of Roland,
Oliver and the rear guard under
them
ganeth 3 pr. s. yawns AS gānian
gape inf. gape, yawn; cf. Icel
gapa
gappe sb. gap; cf. Icel gap
gapyng p. gaping
gardyn: garden OF gardin
gardynward: direction of the gar-
den
gargat: throat < OF gargate

garleek sb. garlic AS *garlēc*
 garlondes: garlands OF *garlande*
 gastly: ghastly < AS *gāstan*
 gat: 3 pt. s. begot; cf. *gete*
 gate sb. gate; gatis pl.; cf. *Icel*
gata

gate: 3 pt. s. refl. got; cf. *gete*

Gatesden: John Gatisden, physician
 at Oxford in fourteenth century,
 court-doctor of Edward II

gat-tothed a. gap-toothed, with
 teeth set wide apart < *Icel* *gat*
 "hole" (?)

gaude sb. deceit, graft; cf. OF
gaudir "rejoice"

gaude grene: light or yellowish
 green F *gaude* "weld" a plant
 for dyeing

gauded pp. ornamented with
 gawdies, which were the larger
 beads in the set, marking the
 Paternosters

Gaufred: Geoffrey de Vinsauf,
 mediæval scholar, wrote "*Nova*
Poetria" shortly after the death
 of Richard I, with original mod-
 els, in bombastic and turgid
 style. One poem bewailed Rich-
 ard's death: "O *Veneris lacri-*
mosa dies," etc.

Gaunt: Ghent, city in Flanders,
 a center of cloth-making

gauren inf. stare

Gawayn: Sir Gawain, nephew and
 bravest knight of King Arthur
 in older tales

Gawle: Chaucer translates "*Galli*"
 as folk of Gawle, The Gauls

gay: gay, gaudy in dress F *gai*

gayler: jailer OF *geolier*

gayne: benefit *Icel* *gagn*

gayneth pr. s. impers. gains

Gazan: acc. of Gaza, a city on the
 plain of Philistia, south of Jaffa

geaunt: giant OF *geant*

geere: clothes, garb, equipment;
 cf. AS *gearwe*, *Icel* *gervi*

geere: inconstant behavior orig.
 uncert.

gees pl. geese AS *gōs*, pl. *gēs*

geeste: geste, story of adventure;
 the (alliterative) meter of gestes;
 pl. *Gesta Romanorum*, a mediæ-
 val book of anecdotes OF *geste*

geeste inf. to recite gestes

geestours: gestours, tellers of tales

gelde inf. castrate

gelous: jealous OF *gelos*

gemmes, gemmys: gems, jewels F
gemme

Genelloun: Ganelon, one of Char-
 lemagne's officers, who betrayed
 the rear-guard of Charlemagne's
 army as it passed over the
 Pyrenees. The entire rear guard,
 including Roland and Oliver, was
 destroyed at Roncesvalles. Gane-
 lon was punished by being torn
 to pieces by horses

generalle: liberal, broadly sympa-
 thetic OF *general*

gent a. elegant OF.

genterye: gentleness, noble birth,
 "gentillesse" OF *genterise*

gentil: gentle, noble, well-bred
 OF.

gentillesse: gentleness, nobility OF.

gentilleste: noblest, most delicate

gentilly: gently, honourably

gentilman: gentleman

gentils sb. pl. nobility OF.

gentrye: nobility; cf. *genterye*

Genyloun: Ganelon, of Brittany;
 cf. *Genelloun*

geometrie: geometry OF.

gerdonyng: guerdoning, reward
 OF *guerdoner*

gerdoun: guerdon, recompence OF
guerdon

gere sb. equipment; cf. *geere*

gereful: changeable

geres pl. behaviors; cf. *geere*

gerland: cf. *garland*

Gernade: Granada, in Spain

gerner sb. garner OF *gernier*

Gerounde: Gironde, a river on west
 coast of France

gery: changeable; cf. *geere*

gesse 1 pr. s. guess, think; cf.
Dan gissa

gest: guest AS.

gete inf. get, gain, regain, beget;
 gate 3 pt. s. refl.; gat 3 pt. s.;

cf. *Icel* *geta*, AS *gitan*

gethe 3 pr. s. goes; cf. *gon*

geven pp. given; cf. *yive*

gide sb. guide F *guide*

giggyng p. fitting; the "guige,"

- or leather strap by which a knight's shield was slung OF guige
- Gilbertyn:** perhaps Gilbertus Anglicus
- gilde:** golden AS gyldan
- gile:** guile OF.
- gilt:** guilt AS gylt "crime"
- gilte:** golden
- giltelees:** guiltless
- gilty a.** guilty
- ginne inf.** begin, attempt; **gan pt. s.;** **gonne, gunne 3 pt. pl.** < AS **ginnan**
- gipser sb.** pouch, wallet F **gibeciere**
- girdel sb.** girdle AS gyrdel
- girden:** strike orig. uncert.
- girdes pl.** youth of either sex AS **gyrl(?)**
- girt 3 pt. s., pp.** girdled AS **gyrdan**
- gise:** guise, fashion, dress OF **guise**
- glad, glade:** glad, merry; pl. bright, sparkling AS **glæd**
- gladde, glade inf.** make glad, comfort; **gladeth imp. pl.** AS **gladian**
- glader:** one who makes glad
- gladly:** usually; willingly
- gladnesse:** gladness, joy; wel sette gladnesse] seemly or becoming joy
- gladsom:** pleasant
- glarynge:** glaring, staring
- glas:** glass AS **glæs n.**
- glasynge:** glasswork
- gledy:** burning AS **glēd, "a coal"**
- glee:** entertainment AS **glēo**
- gleede:** glowing coal, fire AS **glēd f.**
- glem sb.** gleam AS **glæm m.**
- gliterynge:** glittering
- glood 3 pt. s.** glided; cf. **glyde**
- glorie:** glory OF **glorie**
- glose sb.** interpretation, commentary, hence margin of book; cf. text F **glose**
- glosen inf.** gloze, interpret texts, flatter, cajole F **gloser**
- gloteny:** gluttony OF **glotenie**
- glotoun:** glutton F **glouton**
- gloweden 3 pt. pl.** glowed AS **glōwan**
- glowyng:** glowing, shining
- glyde inf.** glide, ascend; **glood 3 pt. s.** AS **glidan**
- glyteren 3 pr. pl.** glitter; **glytered 3 pt. s.**
- gnawynge p.** gnawing, champing AS **gnagan**
- gnodded 3 pt. pt.** rubbed; cf. AS **gnidan**
- gnow 3 pt. s.** gnawed
- gobet sb.** section, fragment F **gobet**
- Goddese:** goddess AS **god**
- Goddis poss. s.** God's; pl. Gods
- godelyhede s.** goodness
- godenesse, godnesse:** goodness
- godhede:** divinity
- gold, golde s.** gold AS **gold n.**
- gold-bete pp.** covered with beaten gold
- goldene:** golden
- gold-hewen:** hewn of gold
- goldryng:** gold ring
- goldsmhythre:** goldsmith's work
- gold-threed:** gold thread
- gole:** mouthful of words, cackle F **golee**
- golet:** throat, gullet OF **goulet**
- goliardeys sb.** buffoon, teller of coarse jests
- Golias:** Goliath, giant slain by David
- gomme:** gum OF.
- gon inf.** go; **goo 1 pr. s.;** **goost 2 pr. s.;** **gethe, goth 3 pr. s.;** **goon 2 pr. pl.;** **go imp.;** **goyng p.;** **go, goon pp.;** **go bet]** go as quickly as possible AS **gān**
- gonne sb.** gun orig. uncert.
- gonne 3 pt. pl.** began; cf. **ginne**
- good sb.** goods, property; by his propre good] within his own income AS **gōd**
- goode sb.** good
- goode a.** good
- goodely:** goodly, kindly
- goodenesse:** goodness
- goodlich:** goodly
- goodlieste:** goodliest
- gooldes:** marigolds
- goon inf.** go; cf. **gon;** **goon with childe]** pregnant; **goon a blake-**

beryed] go a blackberrying, wandering; up goon the trompes] the trumpets sound
 goon is: ago
 goore: a gore, part of a garment, met. for the garment; under my goore] within my garment AS gāra m.
 goos: goose AS gōs
 goost sb. ghost, spirit; Holy Ghost AS gāst m.
 goost biforn: anticipate; cf. gon
 goot: goat AS gāt m.
 Gootland: Gotland, an island in the Baltic Sea
 goshawk: goshawk AS gōshafuc
 gosis: poss. goose's
 gossib: friend, gossip AS godsibb "God-relative." i.e. by baptismal sponsorship
 gossomer: gossamer, thin fabric
 gost: spirit; cf. goost
 goth 3 pr. s.; goes; cf. gon
 gourde: gourd, drinking vessel OF gourde
 goute: gout OF goutte
 governaille: control, rule OF gouvernail "rudder"
 governaunce: method of management, control, self-control OF.
 governed 3 pt. s. governed;
 governeth 2 imp. pl. OF governor
 governeresse: governess, mistress, ruler OF.
 governour: ruler, umpire OF.
 governyng sb. control, guardianship
 gowne: gown OF gone
 goynge p. going; cf. gon
 grace: grace, favor, help, mercy, lot; his lady grace] his lady's favor OF.
 grame: harm, misery AS grama
 grammeere: grammar OF grammaire
 grapnel: grapnel, grappling iron diminutive of OF grapin "hook"
 gras: grace
 gras: grass AS græs
 gras-tyme: the summer, when a horse can get grass in the fields
 Graunsome: Sir Oto de Graunson,

knight of Savoy, in the pay of Richard II
 graunt sb. grant, privilege OF graunter
 graunt mercy of: great thanks for
 graunten inf. grant; grauntith imp. s.
 grauntyng sb. granting, grant
 graven inf. carve, dig, bury AS grafan
 grayn: dye term; in grayn] a fast color, made from the grain, or kermes F grain
 Grece: Greece
 grece sb. grease F graisse
 gree: good part; in gree] in goodwill F gre
 gree: rank, superiority OF gre
 greet, greete a. great, splendid; the greete] the important part AS grēat
 Greke: Greek; Grekes poss.
 grene: green, usual color for archers AS grēne
 grenehede: youthful folly
 Grenewych: Greenwich, Chaucer's home, below Deptford
 gres: grass AS græs
 gresly: grisly, fearsome AS grislic
 gret, grete: great; cf. greete
 Grete See: the Mediterranean
 gretenesse: greatness, size
 grette pt. s. greeted AS grētan
 gretter: greater
 gretteste: greatest
 grevaunce: grievance, trouble F grevance
 greve inf. grieve, trouble OF grever
 greve sb. grove AS grāf f.
 grevosly: grievously
 grevous: grievous
 grew pt. pl. grew; cf. growe
 greye: grey AS græg
 greyn: grain OF grain
 griffon: griffin, fabulous beast, half lion, half eagle OF.
 Grisil: Grisel, name for a gray horse
 Grisildis: Griselda
 grisly: horrible, awful AS grislic
 grobbe inf. grub orig. uncert.
 grond: 3 pt. s. ground AS grin-dan

gronte 3 pt. s. groaned AS grānian
 grope inf. test, feel AS grōpian
 grot: atom, particle AS grot
 grot: groat, small coin ODu
 groot
 grounded pp. well versed in
 grow inf. grow; grew pt. pl. AS grōwan
 groynnge: murmuring of discontent
 grucche inf. grumble; grucchen pr. pl. OF grouchier
 gruf ad. groveling, on his face; cf. grovel
 grym, grymme: grim, fierce AS grim
 grynt 3 pr. s. grindeth
 grys sb. an expensive grey fur, very stylish at this time OF gris
 grysely: horrible
 gunne 3 pl. pt. began; cf. ginne
 guy imp. pl. guide; cf. gye OF gui
 gyde sb. guide
 gyden inf. guide, conduct
 gye inf. guide, lead; guy imp. pl. gyle: guile, deceit OF.
 gyn: machine, device OF engin
 gyngebreed: ginger bread OF gingebras
 gynglen inf. jingle. Bridles were often decorated with small bells
 gypoun: a doublet, tunic OF jupon
 gyse: manner, custom OF guise
 gyterne: kind of guitar OF guiterne
 gytes pl. mantel; cf. OF guite "hat"

H

haberdasshere sb. haberdasher, merchant of hats, or of pins, buttons, etc.; cf. AF hapertas
 habergeoun: a short hauberk, or coat-of-mail OF haubergeon
 habitacioun: habitation OF habitation
 habounde inf. abound F abonder
 Habradate: Abradates, king of Susi
 habundance: abundance

habundant: abundant
 habundantly: abundantly
 hachis: hatches AS hæcc f.
 haddist 3 pt. s. hadst; haddyn 3 pt. pl.; cf. have
 haire: hair-shirt AS hær f.
 hakeney: hackney; cf. OF haque-nee, and Hackney
 hakke inf. hack AS haccian
 haldist 2 pr. s. holdest; cf. holde
 hale inf. draw; cf. AS geholian
 half wey pryme: 7.30, half way from 6 to 9
 halfe sb. side, behalf; a goddess halfe] in God's name AS healf
 halfe a. half
 halfe word: equivocation
 halke: hiding-place
 hallis: halls AS heal
 hals: neck; (acc. of reference) AS heals
 halse 1 pr. s. conjure AS heal-sian
 halt 3 pr. s. holds; cf. holde
 halte a. lame AS healt
 halwed pp. blessed AS hālgian
 halwes pl. saints, used to denote saint's shrines; halwes twelve] the twelve disciples of Christ AS hālig "holy"
 Haly: Arabian physician of eleventh century
 halyday: holyday
 hamer sb. hammer AS hamer
 han inf., 3 pr. pl. hāve; cf. have AS habban
 handes pl. hands AS hand m.
 hangyn inf. hang; hongeth 3 pr. s.; heeng, heng, henge pt. s., pl.; honge 3 pt. pl.; hyng 3 pt. s. AS hangian
 Hanybal: Hannibal, Carthaginian general, defeated Rome at Placentia, Lake Trasimenus, and Cannæ, B. C. 218-217
 happe sb. chance, luck, good fortune; cf. Icel happ
 happe, happyn inf. happen, occur; happith 3 pr. s.; happed, happede 3 pt. s.
 harde: hard; harde grace] misery AS heard
 harde pp. heard; cf. here
 hardely, hardily: certainly, surely

hardinesse: boldness
 hardnesse: cruelty
 hardy: strong, brave F hardi
 hardyng: hardening
 harlotrye: ribaldry; pl. ribald jests OF.
 harme s. harm, injury, evil AS hearm m.
 harmful: harmful, evil
 harneised pp. equipped, decorated OF harnesschier
 harneys: armor F harnais
 harome: harm; cf. harme
 harpe sb. harp AS hearpe
 harpyng sb. playing upon the harp
 harre sb. hinge AS heorra
 harrow! interj. alas!
 hart: heart; cf. herte
 hartely: heartily, truly
 haryed pp. dragged along AS hergian "ravage"
 hasard: gambling OF.
 hasardour: gamester
 hasardrye: dicing, gaming
 Hasdrubales: Hasdrubal, a Carthaginian general
 hasel: hazel-tree AS hæsel
 hastely: hastily
 hastif: hasty OF hasti
 hastifliche: hastily
 hastiliche: hastily
 hastou, hastow 2 pr. s. hast thou; cf. have
 hate sb. hatred AS hete m.
 hate 1 pr. s. hate AS hatian
 hath 3 pr. s. has, there is; cf. have
 haubergeoun: coat of mail; cf. habergeoun
 hauberke: coat of mail OF hauberc
 hauk sb. hawk AS hafoc
 hauke inf. hawk, hunt with the hawk
 haukyng: hawking
 haunt: abode, region; practice, skill; district covered by one man OF hanter
 haunteth 3 pr. s. makes a practice of
 hautayn, hauteyn: proud, high-sounding F hautain
 have, han, havyn inf. have, keep; hastow 2 pr. s. hast thou; hath

3 pr. s.; han 3 pr. pl; haddist 2 pt. s.; haddyn 3 pt. pl.; have 3 pr. s. subj. AS habban
 haven: port
 havyn inf. have; cf. have
 hawberk: hauberk OF hauberc
 hawe: haw, fruit of dog-rose AS haga
 hawebake: a baked haw, husk for a famished man; hence, plain food
 hawethorn: hawthorn AS haga-born
 hayl sb. hail AS hægel
 hayle inf. hail
 Hayles: Hailes, in Gloucester
 he . . . he . . . he used as dem. pron. this one, that one, another, etc.
 healle inf. heal; heeled pp. AS hēlan
 Hebrayk a. Hebraic, Hebrew
 hed, hede, heed: head AS hēafod n.
 heede sb. heed AS hēdan
 heeld 3 pt. s. held; cf. holde
 heele sb. health AS hēlu f.
 heelp inf. help; cf. helpe
 heeng 3 pt. s., pl. hanged; cf. hangyn
 heep sb. heap, crowd, lot AS hēap
 heer sb. hair; heeris pl. AS hār
 heer ad. here AS hēr
 heer-biforn: heretofore
 heere inf. hear; cf. here
 heerforth: in this direction
 heerupon: hereupon
 heeste: command AS hās f.
 heete 3 pr. s. promise; cf. hete
 heete sb. vow; cf. AS gehāt
 heeth sb. heath, field AS hēð
 hegges: hedges; cf. AS hege m.
 heigh, heih a. high; in heigh and lough] under all circumstances, completely AS hēah
 heigh, heighe ad. high
 hel, helle: Hades, Hell, torment AS hell
 helde inf. hold; pt. s. held; cf. holde AS healdan
 hele sb. health, well-being AS hēlu
 hele inf. conceal AS helan
 hele inf. heal AS hēlan

helme: helmet AS.
 helmed pp. protected by a helmet
 OF < AS.
 Helowys: Heloise, wife of Abelard,
 great teacher of XIIth century,
 retired to a convent
 helpe s. help, aid; do helpe] aid,
 assist AS help
 helpe, heelp inf. help, assist; heelp
 3 pt. s.; helpe 3 pr. s. subj.,
 imp.; holpen pp. AS helpan
 helplees: helpless
 hem: them
 hende: courteous, gentle AS
 gehenda "near"
 heng, henge 3 pt. s., pl. hanged;
 cf. hangyn
 henne: hence AS heona, hine
 hente inf. acquire, seize, grip;
 hente pt. s.; hent pp. AS hentan
 hepe: hip; fruit of the dog-rose
 AS hēope
 hepe: heap, number; cf. heep
 her: hair AS hār
 heraud: herald OF.
 herbe yve: herb ivy, ground-pine
 herbergage: lodging, furnishing,
 lodgings OF.
 herbergeours: purveyors of lodging
 herberwe: harbor, inn, position in
 the ecliptic; cf. Icel herbergi
 herberwyng: harboring
 Hercules: son of Zeus and Alc-
 mene
 herd: hard
 herde sb. herdsman AS hierde
 herde 3 pt. s. heard; cf. here
 here sb. hair AS hār
 here: their
 here, heere inf. hear; herde 3 pt.
 s.; harde, herd, herde pp.;
 heere 2 imp. s. AS hēran
 herbefore, herebefore: previous-
 ly, a while ago
 Herenus: of the Erinyes, or Furies
 Hereos (med.) the malady of love
 herieth 3 pr. s. praises; heryen
 3 pr. pl.; heryed pp. AS herian
 heris pl. hair, hairs; cf. here
 herith 3 pr. s. hears; cf. here
 heriynge sb. praise
 herkene, herkne inf. listen, hark-
 en; herkenyth, herkneth imp.
 AS hercnian

Hermanno: really Herennianus,
 son of Zenobia
 Hermengyld: Ermengild
 Hermyon: Hermione
 herne: corner, nook AS hyrne
 Herodes s., pl. Herod; Herod
 ordered the slaughter of the
 Innocents in Bethlehem; cf.
 Matt. ii. 16
 heronsewes: heronsaw, hernsaw,
 heron OF heronceau
 heroun: heron OF heron
 Herro: Hero, beloved of Leander
 at Sestos
 Herry: Harry
 herse: hearse, in the sense of bier,
 or of a body lying in state OF
 herce
 hert: hart, stag AS heort
 herte sb. heart AS heorte
 herte 3 pt. s. hurt OF heurter
 herte-blood: heart's blood
 hertely a. hearty
 hertely ad. sincerely, cordially
 herte-roote: "bottom of one's
 heart"
 herte-spoon: breast-bone
 herye 3 pr. pl. praise; cf. herieth
 AS herian
 herytage: heritage OF heritage
 heste: behest, command AS hās
 Hester: Esther, queen of Ahasue-
 rus; cf. the Book of Esther
 hete sb. heat AS hātu f.
 hete inf. promise, be named; het,
 heete, hete, highte pr. s.; het,
 hete, hight pt.; hyght pp.
 heterly: fiercely; cf. Low Ger het-
 ter "irritating"
 hethen sb. heathen; another
 hethen] a different heathen from
 AS hāðen
 Hethenesse: heathen lands
 hette 3 pt. s. heated AS hātan
 heve inf. 'heave, lift AS hebban
 hevedes, hevedis: heads AS hēafod
 heven, hevene: heaven; hevene and
 lia] heaven (coelum) and Leah
 (the busy wife); hevene of peo-
 ple] < coelum + leos (gr. peo-
 ple); hevenes lillie] < coeli lilia,
 fanciful etymologies for Cecilia
 AS heofon m.
 hevenelyche: heavenly

hevenysh: heavenly, of the heavenly bodies
 hevyness: heaviness, despondency, sorrow AS hefigness
 hewe: hue, color, complexion AS hēow n.
 hewed a. hued
 hewen inf. cut, hew AS hēawan
 hey: hay AS hēg
 heyest: highest
 heye-weye: highway
 heyre-clowt: hair-cloth AS clūt m.
 heyres: heirs OF heir
 heysoge: hedge-sparrow, "hay-suck"
 hider ad. hither AS
 hidouse: hideous OF hidous
 hidously: hideously
 hie ad. high AS hēah
 hierde: shepherd AS hierde m.
 high: in a high pitch
 highte 3 pr. s. was named; cf. hete
 hil: hill AS hyll m.
 hipes, hypes sb. pl. hips AS hype m.
 hir pers. pron., dat. and acc. to her, her
 hir, hire poss. her, their
 hires: her
 hise: his
 historial: historic
 hit pron. it
 hitte pt. s. hit; cf. Icel hitta
 ho: who AS hwā
 hod: hood AS hōd
 Hogge: Hodge, nickname for Roger
 hogges poss. hog's AS hogga
 hoke: hook AS hōc m.
 hold, holde inf., 1 pr. s. hold, keep, possess, consider; haldist 2 pr. s.; halt, halte 3 pr. s.; heild, helde 3 pt. s.; hoold imp.; holde pp. AS healdan
 hole sb. hole, hollow AS hol n.
 hole a. all AS hāl
 holly: wholly, entirely
 holm: oak (evergreen) AS hōlen(?)
 holour: lecher OF holier
 holpen pp. helped; cf. helpe
 holsum: wholesome
 holt: grove AS holt n.

holwe a. hollow AS holh
 holy: wholly, entirely
 holyday: holy day, holiday
 hom: whom
 homage: homage; did homage] acknowledged as lord OF.
 hom-comynge; cf. hoom-comynge
 homward: homeward
 homycide: murderer OF homicide
 hond, honde s. hand, oath; of hir hond] of arms AS hand f.
 hondred: hundred AS hundred
 honeste, honestee, honestete sb. honesty, decency OF honeste
 honeste a. honorable, decent OF.
 honge 3 pt. pl. hanged; cf. hangyn
 hongeth 3 pr. s. hangs; cf. hangyn
 honneure inf. honor; honoureth 3 pr. s.; honouren 3 pr. pl. subj.; honored pp. OF honourer
 honouren pl. s.; cf. honneure
 honourable: honorable
 hony: honey AS hunig
 hoode sb. hood AS hōd
 hoodeles: hoodless, unprotected from weather
 hool a. whole, well, entire AS hāl
 hoold sb. castle; cf. AS heald
 hoold imp. hold; cf. holde
 hoole sb. hole
 hoole ad. wholly
 hooly a. holy
 hooly ad. wholly, entirely
 hoolynesse: holiness
 hoom ad. home AS hām m.
 hoom-comynge: home-coming
 hoomely, hoomly: simply, unostentatiously
 hoor: hoary AS hār
 hoord: hoard, treasure AS hord
 hoot, hoote a. hot; cf. humour AS hāt
 hoote ad. hotly
 hopen 1 pr. pl. dance AS hop-pian
 hoppesteres a. dancing
 horde sb. hoard, much money AS hord n. m.
 hore: grayhaired AS hār
 Hornchild: King Horn, or Horn

Childe, a Middle English metrical romance
horne: horn, bugle; drinking horn
 AS horn m.
horowe: foul AS horig
hors: horse AS.
horse a. hoarse AS hās
horsly: horselike, thoroughbred
hosen pl. hose AS hose
hostelrye: inn OF hostelerie
hostiler: inn-keeper OF hostelier
hote: hot; fote hote] foot hot, right away, hastily AS hāt
hou: how
houndes, **houndys** pl. hounds AS hund
houres: hours; kepte in houres] treated him according to the astrological hours; watched for times when the planets were in the proper position for favorable treatment OF hore
hous sb. house; one of the 12 parts of the zodiacal circle; derkeste hous] Scorpio (Sk.); Hous of Fame] The House of Fame, poem by Chaucer AS hūs
housbond: husband Icel hūsbōndi
housbondrie: economy
houses of office: servants' quarters
housholdere: householder
how! interj. ho!
how, **howe** ad. how, in what manner
how: however
howped pt. pl. whooped OF houer
howve: hood; sette his howve] make him look foolish AS hūfe
huge: great; cf. OF ahuge
Hugelyn of Pyze: Ugolino of Pisa, slain July, 1288
Hugh of Lyncoln: Hugh of Lincoln, a boy of eight, was supposed to have been murdered by Jews at Lincoln in 1255
Hulle: Hull, seaport on east coast of England
humanitee: kindness F.
humbley: humbly
humblesse: humbleness
humour sb. element or quality.
 Ancient medicine was based up-

on Galen's idea of the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water, and the four humours or qualities: hot, cold, dry, moist. A man's temperament depended upon the combinations of these qualities. Sickness was supposed to result from an excess of one or more of these. Each part of the body could be affected; thus the liver might have an excess of hot, or of dry, or of both OF humor
humyltee: humility
hunderede: hundred
hungir: hunger AS hungor
hunte sb. huntsman; **huntys** pl. AS hunta m.
hunten inf. hunt AS huntian
huntere: hunter
hunteresse: huntress
huntynge: hunting
hurte 3 pt. s. hurt; cf. OF hurter
hurtelyn 3 pr. pl. hurtle, drive, dash; **hurtleth** 3 pr. s. < "hurt" + frequentative -le
hurtes pl. hurts
hust pp. hushed
huwes sb. color AS hīw
hy, **hye** a. lofty
hyde inf. hide; **hydestow** 2 pr. s. AS hȳdan
hyderward: in this direction
hye sb. haste < AS hīgan
hye inf. hasten, hie; imp.; **hyed** pt. pl. AS hīgan
hyene: hyena, the gall of which was a cure for weak eyes OF.
hyer a. higher, upper; hadde the **hyer hond**] gained the victory
hyeste: highest
hyeweeye: highway
hyght pp. called; cf. **hete**
hylde pt. s. bent AS hylðan
hym dat. of reference
hynd: hind, doe AS hind f.
hyndre inf. hinder, interfere with AS hindrian
hyndreste a. hindmost
hyne sb. hind, farm-hand AS hīna m.
hyng 3 pt. s. hung; cf. **hangyn**
hypes: hips AS hype

hyre sb. hire, pay; sette to hyre]
 sub-let to another AS hȳrian
 hyre: their
 hyred pp. hired

I

I, ik pers. pron. I; common prefix of pp.; cf. Y
 ibenched: couched < AS benc
 iboundyn pp. bound AS bunden
 ibroke pp. broken AS brocen
 ibroudede: embroidered OF broude
 icorounede pp. crowned OF.
 ido pp. done, ended; cf. don
 Idus: Ides, 15 March Lat.
 ifounded pp. founded, set AS fundian
 ignoraunce: ignorance OF.
 i-halowed: view-hallooed (of hert) OF halloer
 ik pers. pron. I
 iknyt pp. knit, bound AS cnyttan
 ilke: same, very AS ilca
 illusioun: illusion OF.
 iloryn pp. lost AS loren < lēosan
 Ilyoun: Ilion or Ilium, the Greek name for Troy, is used by Chaucer as though it were not the same place. This is probably because in Guido delle Colonne Ilion is used as the name of the citadel of Troy
 imaginacioun: imagination OF.
 imakid pp. made AS macod < macian
 impertinent: not appertaining OF.
 importable: unendurable OF.
 impressioun: remembrance OF.
 in sb. inn AS inn, in
 in conseil: secretly OF.
 In principio: The friars constantly quoted the text, "In principio erat verbum," "in the beginning was the word," John i. 1, as they went from house to house
 In principio mulier est hominis confusio: Woman, from the beginning, has been man's ruin (Vincent of Beauvais, Speculum Historiale X. 71)

in the gilt: at fault
 inclinacioun: inclination, tendency due to 'natal star' OF.
 incubus: sprite, fiend Lat.
 Inde: India OF.
 indulgence: permission OF.
 inequal: unequal; heure inequal] the astrological hours varied with the time of year, the period of daylight being always divided into twelve hours Lat inæqualis
 infect a. invalid A 320 The sergeant could clear up any tangles or limitations in the title, and transfer the property in fee simple Lat.
 infecte inf. infect Lat infectus
 infeere a. together in + AS gefēra
 infortunat a. carrying misfortune Lat infortunatus
 infortune: misfortune OF.
 iniquitee sb. evil OF.
 immortal: immortal OF.
 inne prep. in
 inned pp. provided inns, lodged
 Innocent III: 1161-1216, Pope
 inome pp. taken AS genomen
 inow, inowh: enough AS genōh
 inportable: insufferable, unbearable OF.
 impossible: sb. an impossibility OF.
 inquisityf: inquisitive OF.
 inspired pp. filled with life or animation OF inspirer
 instreumentis: instruments OF instrument
 instrument: musical instrument
 intresse: interest, concern Lat interesse "usury"
 inwith: within
 ipeyntede pp. painted OF peint < peindre
 iren: iron
 Isaude: Isolt, Iseult, Isolde; cf. Tristram
 istede: instead
 istrike pp. struck AS gestricen < strican
 isworn pp. sworn AS gesworen < swerian
 itawght pp. taught AS getāht < tæcan

ithewid a. or pp. trained, accustomed AS þēaw "manner"
 iwaxe pp. become AS weaxan
 iwounde pp. wounded AS gewundod
 iwreten, iwretyn pp. written AS gewriten < writan
 iwroken pp. avenged AS gewrocen < wrecan
 iwrought, iwrowht pp. wrought AS gewocht < wircan

J

jade: poor horse; cf. Icel jada "mare"
 Jakke of Dove: Jack of Dover, probaby a warmed-over pastry
 Jakke Straw: Jack Straw, leader of riots in London (1381)
 jealous, jalowse: jealous (fol. by over) OF jalous
 jalousie: jealousy OF.
 jamboux: plates to protect the shins OF.
 Jame: James, at whose shrine the Wife had been as pilgrim
 jane: a small silver coin of Genoa, whence the name
 Janekyn: Jenkin
 jangelynge: jangling, chattering OF jangler
 jangle 3 pr. pl. chatter; jangleth 2 pr. s.
 janglere: noisy fellow, chatterer
 jangleresse: loose talker
 janglyng: disputing
 Jankyn: Johnny; priests were called Sir John
 Janus: Bifrons, the Roman god of beginnings, two-faced
 jape sb. trick, jest OF.
 jape inf. jest, play tricks; japed pp. tricked
 Jason: the leader of the Argonauts in the quest for the Golden Fleece, which he gained by the aid of Medea, q. v.
 jay: a bird which can be taught a few words OF jai
 Jay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour: I have lost my time and my pains
 jeet: jet OF jet
 jelosye: jealousy OF.

jealous: jealous OF jalous
 Jepte: Jephthah, judge of Israel; (cf. Book of Judges xi)
 Jeremye: Jeremiah (iv)
 Jerome: "Adversus Jovinianum" Libri II, a Latin work of St. Jerome (d. 420), directed against a monk who held widows and married women equal in grace with virgins
 jet: fashion; newe jet] latest style OF get
 jeupardyes pl. jeopardies, dangers; problems in chess, situations or positions of chess men OF jeu parti "a game with even chances"
 jeweles pl. jewels OF juel
 Jewerye: Jewry, Jewish quarter
 Jewes poss. pl. Jews'; Jewes work] perhaps damascened work, or inlaid work
 Jobs: Job's
 Joce: St. Josse, confused by the wife with Sir Jouce, whose treatment of his wife deserved and received a reward similar to that of the Wife; (cf. Jean de Meung, "Testament," 461 f. Skeat)
 jocunde: merry Lat jocundus
 jogelours: jugglers OF jogleor
 jogelrye: act of jugglery OF.
 John: the Nun's Priest
 joie: joy OF.
 jolif: jolly OF.
 jolitee: enjoyment, comfort, fun OF.
 joly: pretty, merry OF.
 jolyer: more handsome
 jolynesse: merriment
 jolyte: jollity
 Jon: John
 Jonas: Jonah
 Jonathas: Jonathan
 Joseph: son of Jacob, gained a high position in Egypt through his interpretation of Pharaoh's dream of the seven lean kine which devoured the seven fat kine. Cf. Genesis xl. 41
 journee: day's march OF.
 Jovinian: object of Jerome's attack in his treatise "Adv. Jovinianum"; cf. Jerome

joye: joy

joynant a. adjoining OF joignant

joyned pt. s. joined, let touch
OF joindre

Jubaltar: Gibraltar

Judicum: the Book "of Judges"
Lat (gen. pl. used)

Judith: Judith of Bethulia, slew
Holofernes, captain of the host,
and saved her people. Cf. the
"Book of Judith," in the "Apoc-
rypha"

jueles: jewels OF juel

jugé sb. judge OF.

jugé 1 pr. s. judge

juggement: judgment, decision OF.

Julius: Julius Cæsar

Juno: the consort of Jove, and
queen of Olympus

jupartie: jeopardy OF jeu parti
"game with even chances"

juste inf. joust, fight in tourna-
ment OF joster

justes pl. as s. tournament OF
justes

justise sb. judge; administration
of justice

Juvenal: satirist of later Roman
empire

juwise, juyse: judgment, sentence
OF juise

K

kable: rope OF cable

kaityf: villain OF caitif

kakelynge: cackling

kalkuled: calculated OF calculer

kan pr. s., pl. know, knows, can;
cf. konne AS can

kanstow 2 pr. s. canst thou; cf.
konne

karf 3 pt. s. cleft AS ceorfan

katapuce: caper-spurge F cata-
puce

kaught pt. s., pl. caught; cf.
cacche. OF cachier

Kaukasous: Caucasus, mountains
between Caspian and Black Seas

kaute pp. caught; cf. cacche

kaves: caves OF.

kaynard: sluggard, fool OF cag-
nard

Kayrrud: "Red Town," an un-

known place in Brittany Celt
Kerr (town) + rud (red)

keen: cows AS cū; pl. cȳ, cȳe,
gen. cȳna

keene: bold AS cēne

keep sb. notice, heed; take keep]
pay heed to AS cēpan

kembd pp. combed AS camb

kempe: coarse (of hair) (? AS
cempa "champion")

kempt pp. combed

ken: kin, men; al ken] all men,
mankind AS cynn

kende pp. know, discern; cf.
konne

kene a. keen, sharp AS cēne

kene ad. keenly

Kenelm: king of Mercia in the
ninth century, murdered as a
child

kep, kepe sb. heed; take kepe]
observe; cf. keep

kepe inf. take care of, keep;
good to kepe] worth returning
to, or sticking to

kepere sb. ruler, prior

kept pp. protected; from pirates
or privateers

kepynge p. pr. keeping; cf. kepe

kertelis: kirtles, frock AS cyrtel
kerve inf. cut; korven, korvyn pp.
AS ceorfan

kervere: carver

kervyng sb. carving

lesse inf. kiss; keste 3 pt. s. AS
cyssan

keverede pp. covered OF covrir

keye: key AS cæg f.

kichenes: kitchens AS cycene

kike inf. kick orig. unkn.

kind, kinde sb. nature AS cynd
fn.

king: king AS cyning

kisse inf. kiss; kys 2 imp. s.; kist
pp. AS cyssan

kitte 3 pt. s. cut; cf. kutte

knakkes pl. tricks

knarre sb. knot, knotty muscled
fellow; cf. LG knarre

knarry a. gnarled

knave: boy, servant; knave-child]
male child AS cnafa

knavyssh: knavish

kneled 3 pt. s. knelt AS cnēowlian

knelynge: kneeling
 knette inf. bind; **knet** pp.; cf. knytte
 knewe, knewh pt. s., pl., pt. s. subj. knew; cf. **knownen**
knight of the shire: the representative in Parliament of the county at large
knobbes pl. blotches; cf. **LG knobbe**
knokkeden 3 pt. pl. knocked **AS cnocian**
knotte sb. knot **AS cnotta**
knownen inf. know; **knowestow** 2 pr. s.; **knowe** pp. **AS cnāwan**
knowes: knees **AS cnēow n.**
knowlacheng: knowing, knowledge
knowyng s. knowledge
knyf: knife, dagger **AS cnif**
knyghte: knight
knyghthod, **knyghthede**: knight-hood
knytte inf. knit; **knytttest** 3 pr. s. putttest thyself in conjunction (in astronomical sign) **B 306**; **knyt** pp. **AS cnyttan**
kok: cock **AS coc**
kon imp. acknowledge; cf. **konne**
konne inf. be able, know how, know; **kan** pr. s., pl.; **kanstow** 2 pr. s.; **konne** 2 pr. s.; **koude**, **kouthe** pt.; **kende**, **kouth**, **kowthe** pp. **AS cunnan**, pr. **cann**
konnyng: skill
konnyngly: skillfully
korven, **korvyn** pp. carved, cut; cf. **kerve**
koude pt. knew, could; cf. **konne**
kouth pp. known; cf. **konne**
kouthe pt. could, knew how; cf. **konne**
kowthe pp. well known; cf. **konne**
kunnyng: cunning, skillful
kutte inf. cut; **kitte** 3 pt. s.; **kut** pp.; orig. unkn.
kyd pp. disclosed **AS cȳðan**
kylle inf. kill; cf. **AS cwellan**
kynde sb. nature, species; by **kynde**] according to its natural function; by **wey of kynde**] in the course of nature **AS gecynd fn.**
kynde a. kind

kyndely ad. naturally
kyndely a. natural, kindly
kyndenesse: kindness
kyndled pp. kindles; cf. **Icel kynda**
kyngis poss. king's
kynrede sb. kindred, family **AS cynn "race" + rāden "rule"**
kys 2 imp. s. kiss; cf. **kisse**
kyte: kite, bird of prey **AS cȳta**
kythe inf. disclose, show; **kytheth** 3 pr. s.; **kyd** pp. **AS ȳðan**
laas, **las**: lace, cord, snare **OF laz**
labbyng: blabbing, babbling; cf. **Du labben**
laboure inf. labor **OF labour**
Lacedomya, **Ladomea**: **Laodamia F 1445**
Lacedomye: **Lacedæmonia**, **Sparta**
lacerte: muscle **OF.**
lacyng: lacing
lad pp. led; cf. **lede**
ladde 3 pt. s., pl. took, led; cf. **lede**
ladel: ladle **AS hlædel**
ladi: lady **AS hlæfdie**
ladshippe: ladyship
lady: lady; poss. lady's
lafte 3 pt. s.; pp. neglected, ceased; cf. **leve**
lak, **lakke** sb. lack, defect; cf. **Dan lak "slander"**
lake: linen; cf. **G laken**
lakketh pr. s. lacks; **lakked** pt.; cf. **lak**
lambyssh: lamb-like
Lamek, **Lamekys** poss. **Lamech**, the first practicer of polygamy. **Genesis iv. and v.** He was the father of **Jubal** and **Jubal-Cain**; cf. **Tuballe**
Lamedon: **Laomedon**, father of **King Priam** of **Troy**
lamentacioun: lamentation **OF.**
Lameth: **Lamech**
Lamwel: **Lemuel**, the king (**Proverbs xxxi. 1**)
langage sb. language; fair **langage**] flattery **OF.**
langour: pain, torment **OF.**
langwisseth 3 pr. s. languishes; **langwissing** p. **OF languir**

languyssyng pr. p. languishing
 lanterne: lantern OF.
 Laodomya: Laodamia, wife of
 Proteus, chose to die with
 him
 lappe sb. lap, fold of garment,
 wrapper AS læppa
 lappeth: embraceth
 lapwyng: lapwing AS hlæpe-
 wince
 large a. free, generous; at his
 large] at liberty OF.
 large ad. freely
 largesse: generosity, nobility OF.
 larke: lark AS lāwerce
 las: leash, net, snare OF laz
 lasch sb. lash; cf. Du lasch
 lasse a. less; lasse and moore]
 both smaller and greater AS
 lāssa
 lasse ad. less
 last pl. loads; last quade yeer]
 wagon-load of bad years AS
 hlæst
 last, laste inf., 3 pr. s.; 3 pt. s.,
 pl. last, endure; lasteth 3 pr. s.
 AS lāstan
 lat imp. allow; cf. lette
 laten blood pp. let blood, drained
 off the gravy, that it might keep
 longer; cf. lette
 laton, latoun: latten, a brass alloy
 OF laton
 Latumys: friend of Arrius
 Latyn, Latyne sb. Latin
 laude sb. praise F laude
 laughe inf. laugh; lough 3 pt. s.;
 laughan pp. AS hleghan
 launcegay: a kind of lance OF
 lanegaie
 Launcelet: Sir Launcelot, chief
 knight in Arthur's court
 launde: clearing, dale OF lande
 laurer, laurier: laurel OF laurier
 lauriat: laureate, crowned with
 laurel Lat laureatus
 lavender: laundress OF lavandier
 lavours: lavers, basins OF laveoir
 Lavyne: Lavinia, whom Æneas
 married after he reached Italy
 lawe: law; lawe in kind] law of
 nature AS lagu f.
 lawghe inf. laugh AS hleghan
 lawghtre: laughter AS hleahtor

lawghyng p. laughing
 lawrer: laurel OF laurier
 lawriol: spurge-laurel OF laureole
 laxatyf: lavative, purge OF laxa-
 tif
 lay sb. lay, song OF lai < Celt
 laoi "poem"
 lay sb. law, faith OF lei
 lay 3 pt. s., pl.; cf. lye
 layneres: thongs: with layneres
 lacyngel with fastening up of
 straps OF laniere
 lazar: leper Lat Lazarus (Luke
 xvi. 20)
 Leandre: Leander, lover of Hero,
 who frequently swam the Helles-
 pont to see her, and was finally
 drowned in a storm
 leche: leech, physician AS lāce
 lechecraft: skill in medicine
 lecherous a. sensual OF.
 lecherye: lust OF.
 lechour: lewd fellow OF lecheor
 lede inf. bring; ledith pr. s.; leden
 pr. pl; ladd pt. s., pl.; lad pp.
 AS lēdan
 leden sb. speech; ledene dat. AS
 lēden
 ledith pr. s. leads; cf. lede
 leed sb. kettle, the kitchen-copper,
 sometimes built in permanently
 with grate, or furnace, below
 AS lēad n.
 leed sb. lead
 leef sb. leaf; leef or with the
 flour, Lb 72, an apparent refer-
 ence to a courtly debate among
 poets in Chaucer's time AS lēaf
 n.
 leef a. lief, gladly AS lēof
 leefful: permissible AS lēaf + ful
 leeges: lieges, subjects OF liege
 leene a. lean AS hlāne
 leep 3 pt. s. leaped AS hlēapan
 leere sb. the loin, flank ME lire;
 cf. Icel lār
 leere inf. learn AS leornian
 leese inf. lose; cf. lese AS lēosan
 leeste: least
 leet pt. s. let; leet he slyde] he
 neglected; leet do] ordered to
 make; cf. lette
 leeve a. dear AS lēofe
 leevestow: believest thou; cf. leve

leeveth pr. believes; cf. leve
 lefere: gladder, more welcome
 left pp. left, neglected; cf. leve
 legende: story, often religious OF.
 legges: legs; cf. Icel leggrr
 leid pp. laid
 lekes pl. leeks AS læac
 lemes: beams AS læoma
 lemes: limbs AS lim
 lemman: lover, mistress AS læof
 "dear" + mann
 lene inf., imp. lend, give AS
 lænan
 lene a. lean, thin AS hlæne
 lenger a. longer AS.
 lenger ad. longer; ever lenger
 the more] the longer I love and
 dread you, the more I do Pi 95
 lengest: longest
 lengthe: length, height; upon
 lengthe] after a long run AS
 lengþu
 Lente: Lenten time
 leonesse: lioness
 leonyn: lion-like OF leonin
 leorne inf. learn AS leornian
 leos: people; cf. heven
 leoun: lion; the constellation Leo,
 of which the principal star is
 called Regulus (royal)
 Lepe: a town in Spain
 lere inf. learn; lered pp. AS
 læran
 lerne inf. learn, teach; lerned pp.
 AS leornian
 lernyd a. learned, educated
 lernynge sb. learning
 lese sb. leash OF lesse
 lese inf. lose, ruin; leseth 3 pr. s.;
 loste pt. s.; losten pr. pl.; lore,
 lorn, lorne, lost pp. AS læosan
 lesse: less AS læssa
 lessoun: lesson F leçon
 lest sb. delight, desire AS lust
 lest pr. s. list, desire AS lystan
 lest a. least
 lestyth 2 pr. pl. list, desire; cf.
 lest
 lesynge: losing, loss
 lesynges: lies, deceits AS læasung
 let 3 pr. s. hinders; pp.; cf. letten
 let imper., put aside; cf. lette
 lete inf. let, allow, give up, di-
 vorce; cf. lette

letith pr. s. leave; cf. lette
 letre s. letters OF.
 lette sb. delay < AS lettan
 "hinder"
 lette, letten inf. let, allow, give up,
 cease; lete pr. s.; letith pr. s.;
 leet pt. s.; lat, let imp.; laten
 pp. AS lætan
 lette 3 pt. s. hindered; cf. letten
 letten inf. hinder; let, lettest pr.
 s.; lette pt. s.; let pp. AS let-
 tan
 lettest pr. s. hindrest; cf. letten
 letteris: characters
 Lettow: Lithuania, now a part of
 Western Russia and Eastern
 Prussia
 lettrure: learning OF letreüre
 letuarie: letuary, physician's chest
 of remedies; s., pl. medicine <
 Lat electuarium
 leve sb. permission, leave AS
 læaf f.
 leve a. dear; leve nor looth] good
 or ill AS læof
 leve inf., 1 pr. s., imp. believe;
 leeveth pr. s.; leevestow 2 pr. s.
 AS læfan < gelæfan
 leve inf., 3 pr. s. leave, neglect;
 lafte 3 pt. s., pl.; læfte, left pp.
 AS læfan
 leve imp. live; cf. lyven AS lifan
 levede 3 pt. pl. lived; cf. lyven
 leveful: permissible
 levne: lightning-bolt
 levere a. dearer
 leves pl. leaves
 levyth 3 pr. s. lives; cf. lyven
 lewed, lewede: ignorant, base,
 rude, lay AS læwede "laical"
 lewedenesse, lewednesse: rude
 speech, ignorance, stupidity
 lewedeste: most vile
 lewedly: ignorantly
 lewid: ignorant
 ley inf., 3 pt. s., imp. lay; leyn
 pr. pl.; leyde pt. s., pl.; leyd.
 leyde pp. AS legan
 leyn 3 pr. pl. lay; cf. ley
 leyser: leisure, time OF leisir
 Libra: the Balance, a sign of the
 zodiac
 licenciati: the licentiate had a li-
 cense from the Pope to hear con-

fessions everywhere, independently of the local authorities Lat.
liche: like AS *gelice*
licour: liquor OF *licur*
lief a. dear; as sb. friend; good
 lief my wyf] my dear good wife
 AS *lēof*
lif: life AS *lif*
lifty ad. to the life
liftyng: lifting
lige: true, loyal OF *liege*
ligeance: allegiance OF.
liges: lieges, vassals
liggen inf. lie AS *licgan*
liggyng p. lying
light: easy, light AS *lēoht*
lighte inf. feel light; 3 pt. s.
 lighted, illuminated; **lightned** pp.
 AS *lihtan*
lighte 3 pt. s. alighted AS *lihtan*
lightned pp. lighted (as the moon
 by the sun)
lightnesse: light
ligne: line, descent OF.
lihte: simple; cf. light
likerous: thirsty, greedy, wanton
 AS *liccian*
liketh 3 pr. impers; if you liketh]
 if you please; cf. **likne** AS *lician*
likinge: pleasure
liklihede: likelihood
likly: likely
liklynesse: probability
likne inf. liken; **liketh**, **likyth** 3
 pr. impers.; **likned** pp.; cf. **lyken**
liknesse: parable
likyth 3 pr. impers. pleases; cf.
likne
lilye sb. lily AS *lilie*
lippe: lip AS *lippa*
lipsed 3 pt. s. **lisp** < AS *wlisp*
 “stammering”
lisse sb. solace, comfort, allevia-
 tion AS *liss*, *liþs* f.
lisse inf. alleviate, comfort, ease;
lysse pr. s. subj.; **lissed** pp. AS
lissan
list sb. desire AS *lust* m.
liste impers. it pleased
listes pl. the lists in which tour-
 naments were held AS *list*
listow 2 pr. s. liest thou; cf. **lye**
lite: small, little AS *lȳt*

litel, **litele** a. little AS *lȳtel*
litel ad. little
litestere: dyer ME *lit* “dye” +
stere
lith sb. limb AS *lið*
lithe 3 pr. s. lieth; cf. **lye**
litol: little
livede 3 pt. pl. lived; cf. **lyven**
Livius: Livy, Roman historian,
 whose story of Appius and Vir-
 ginia (bk. iii) came to Chaucer
 through the Roman de la Rose
lode: load AS *lōd* f.
lodemenage: pilotage AS *lōdmann*
 “guide”
lofte: loft; kepte on **lofte**] kept
 aloft, sustained; cf. **Icel** **lopt**
logge: lodge, place OF *loge*
logged pp. lodged
loggyng: lodging
logh: low; cf. **Icel** *lāgr*
logyk sb. logic F *logique*
loke sb. look < AS *lōcian*
loke inf. look, see, contemplate,
 search; **looketh** imp.; **loked** pt.
 pp.; over **loked**] looked over
 AS *lōcian*
loken pp. locked < AS *loc*
lokkes: locks of hair AS *locc* m.
lokyng, **lokyng**: glance, gazing,
 manner of looking; **lokyng** of]
 looking at
Lollere: Lollard, mumblor of
 prayers, a term of reproach ap-
 plied to such reformers as Wy-
 clif; it is confused with **loller**,
 a vagabond, and is made to pun
 badly with the Latin *lolium*,
 or tare, as in B 1183
lomb: lamb AS *lamb* n.
lond sb. land; pl. countries AS
lond n.
longcastel: punning allusion to
 Lancaster, John of Gaunt, earl of
 Richmond (“riche hil”) Du 1318
longe a. long
longen inf. belong; **longeth** 3 pr. s.
 < AS *gelong*
longen 3 pr. pl. long, desire;
longed pt. s. AS *langian*
longere: longer
longes: lungs AS *lungen*
longynge: belonging
loo interj. lo!

loode-sterre: lode-star, pole-star
 looke sb. glance
 looketh imp. search; cf. loke
 lookyng sb. glance
 loore: lore, learning, teaching AS
 lār f.
 loos a. loose, unrestrained; cf.
 Icel lauss
 Looth: Lot, Abraham's kinsman
 looth a. loath, unwilling, odious,
 hateful; looth or lief] displeasing
 or pleasing; me were looth] I
 should be loath AS lāð
 loothly a. hideous
 lord: lord (Mars) B 303; lordes
 poss. AS hlāford m. "loaf-
 ward"
 Lorde interj. Lord!
 lordeth 3 pr. s. lords over
 lordynges: sirs
 lore sb. learning AS lār f.
 lore pp. lost; cf. lese
 lorel: wretch; cf. lorn, a "lost"
 person
 lorn pp. lost; cf. lese
 los, losse: loss, destruction AS.
 losengeour: flattering liar OF
 losengeor
 loste pt. s., pp. lost; cf. lese
 losten pt. pl. lost; cf. lese
 lothere: less welcome
 lotyng: hiding; cf. AS lūtian
 loude ad. loud AS hlūde
 loueste: lowest
 lough: low; cf. Icel lāgr
 lough 3 pt. s., pl. laughed; cf.
 laughe
 louryng: lowering, threatening; cf.
 Du loeren
 loute inf. bow AS lūtian
 love sb. love, lady-love AS lufu
 love-days: days for settling dis-
 putes by a referee, without going
 to law. The friars were fre-
 quently the umpires
 love-drury: affection OF druerie
 love-drynke: love-potion
 love-knotte: love-knot
 love-likyng: loving
 loveded 3 pt. s. loved
 loves: loaves AS hlāf
 lovyere: lover < AS lufian
 lowde: loud, rude AS hlūd
 lowe: low, draggled, in a low

pitch; he bar him lowe] behaved
 as a menial
 lowely a. humble
 lowely ad. humbly
 lowere: lower
 Lucan: Lucan, b. 38 A. D.,
 Roman poet, wrote Pharsalia, an
 historical poem treating of Cæsar
 and Pompey
 luce sb. pike OF lus
 Lucifer: the fallen angel
 Lucina: the moon, Proserpina
 Lucrece: wife of Collatinus; when
 ravished by Sextus Tarquinius,
 she slew herself for shame. Her
 death is given as the cause for
 the overthrow of the kingly
 power and the foundation of the
 republic in Rome
 Lucesse; cf. Lucrece
 Lucy: Lucilia, wife of Lucretius
 lulleth 3 pr. s. lulls, soothes; cf.
 G lullen
 Lumbardye: Lombardy, the plain
 of North Italy, in which Milan
 is situated
 lurkyng: lying hid
 lussheburghes: light coins from
 Luxembourg, whence the name
 lust, luste sb. desire, pleasure, de-
 light AS lust
 luste 3 pt. s. reflex, liked
 lustyhede: lustihood, vigor
 lustely, lustily: lustily, gaily
 lusty: eager, vigorous, gay < AS
 'lust
 lustynesse: pleasure
 luxurie: lechery OF.
 luyte ad. little; cf. lyte
 lychewake: watch over a corpse
 AS lic + waca
 lycorys: licorice OF licoris
 Lyde: Lydia, an ancient kingdom
 in Asia Minor
 lye sb. a lie AS lyge
 lye inf. lie, lie prostrate, remain,
 lodge; listow 2 pr. s.; lithe, lyth
 pr. s.; lay pt. s., pl AS licgan
 lyen inf. tell lies, deceive; lyeth
 pr.; lyed pt. AS lēogan
 Lyeys: city in Armenia, taken
 about 1367
 lyf, lyfe: life AS lif
 lyght sb. light AS lēoht

lyght a. light, easy
 lygne: line OF ligne
 Lygurge: Lycurgus
 lyinge p. lying
 lyke a. like AS gelice
 lyke conj. as
 lyken inf. please; lykne 1 pr. s.;
 lyked 3 pt. s.; lyke pr. s. subj.
 AS lician
 lykerous: lecherous
 lyking sb. pleasure
 lylie sb. lily AS lilie
 lym: limb AS lim
 lym: lime AS lim
 lyme-rod: lime-twigg
 lymerc: dog in leash; lymerys pl.
 OF limier
 lymmes pl. limbs
 lymytacioun: limit, district OF
 limitation
 lymytour sb. a begging friar who
 was limited in his begging to a
 certain territory OF.
 lynage: lineage, descent F lignage
 lynde: linden tree AS lind f.
 lyne: line, race OF ligne
 lyned pp. lined
 Lynyan: Giovanni di Lignano, pro-
 fessor of law at Bologna, 1363-
 1383
 lyssse pr. s. subj. comfort, ease;
 cf. lisse
 lyst sb. ear < AS hlyst, hearing
 lyst pr. s. impers. it pleases; me
 lyst ryght evil] I had no desire to
 AS lystan
 lystes: lists
 lytarge sb. litharge, lead monoxide
 OF.
 lyte a. little
 lyte ad. little
 lytel a., ad. little
 lyth sb. limb AS lið
 lyth 3 pr. s. lies (at law); cf. lye
 lyve dat. life; a life; on lyve]
 alive; in his life (with vague
 expletive force) D 43; his lyve]
 in his life Du 247
 lyven inf. live; lyve 1 pr. s.;
 levyth 3 pr. s.; levede, livede 3
 pt. pl.; leve imp. AS libban
 lyvely a. lively
 lyver: liver, person alive
 lyveree: livery F livrée

lyves (a. use). alive, live, living
 Lyvia: Livia, wife and murderer
 of Drusus, son of Tiberius, A. D.
 23
 lyvis creature: living creature
 lyvyng: life, manner of life; in
 hir lyvyng, hir lyvyng] during
 her whole life
 lyvys (a. use). life's

M

maad 3 pt. s., pp. made; cf. make
 maat a. dejected, feeble OF
 mater
 Macedoyne, Macidonye: Mace-
 donia
 Machabee: "Book of the Macca-
 bees," in the Apocrypha
 Macrobeus: Macrobius, Latin au-
 thor of about 400, whose edition
 of Cicero's "Somnium Scipionis"
 was accepted as authoritative on
 the subject of dreams.
 mad inf. be mad; madde 2 pr. s.
 < AS gemædan
 mad pp. made; cf. make
 madist 2 pt. s. made; cf. make
 Madrian: probably St. Mathurin,
 whose body would not stay in
 the earth until it was buried in
 France, as he desired
 madyn 3 pt. pl. made; cf. make
 madyr: madder, a plant used in
 dyeing AS mædere
 magestee: majesty, power OF
 majeste
 magicien: magician OF.
 magyk sb. magic; magyk nat-
 ureel] a proper use of occult
 powers, as opposed to the im-
 proper use, or black art OF.
 Mahoun: Mahomet, Mohammed
 B 224
 maille: mail, armor OF maille
 "ring of mail"
 maist 2 pr. s. may; cf. mow
 maister: master, sir (a general
 appellative); maistres pl. OF
 maistre
 maister-strete: main street
 maister-tour: main tower
 maistresse: mistress; duenna
 maistrie: the best; medical term =
 sovereign OF.

make sb. mate, husband, wife AS
gemaca
make inf. make, draft, formulate,
compose (poetry); makestow 2
pr. s.; maketh 3 pr. s.; maken
3 pr. pl.; madist 2 pt. s.; made,
maad 3 pt. s.; madyn 3 pt. pl.;
mad, maad, maked pp. AS
macian
makere: creator Pf 199
makestow 2 pr. s. makest thou;
cf. make
Makomete: Mohammed
making: composing
maladye: malady; lik the loveris
maladye of Hereos] like one
afflicted with the lover's disease
OF maladie A 1373
male: bag OF male
malencolie: melancholy, bitter hu-
mor OF malencolie
malencolik a. melancholic, one of
the four humors; choleric, phleg-
matic, sanguine and melancholic
maleys: malice OF malice
malgre: in spite of OF.
Malkin: Maud, the maid
Malkynes: poss. of Malkin, nick-
name for Maud
Malle: a sheep's name; (cf.
Burns' Puir Mailie)
malyce: malice
manace sb. menace, threat OF
menace
manaceth 3 pr. s. menaces OF.
manasyng: threatening
mandementz: summonses OF.
mane, techel, phares; cf. Daniel v.
maner: manor-house OF maneir
"village"
maner, manere: manner, behavior,
deportment; kind of, sort of;
assured maner] self-reliance OF
maniere
manhede, manhod: manhood, man-
liness
mankynde: mankind, the human
race
mannes poss. s. man's
mannysh: virago, woman who as-
sumes man's character
mansoun: mansion; cf. paleys
OF.

manslawhtre: manslaughter AS
mannslæht
mantel sb. mantle, cloak OF.
mantelet: small mantle OF.
manye sb. mania OF manie
manye a. many AS manig
manys: poss. man's
mapamonde: map of the world
OF mappemonde
mapul: maple AS mapultrëow
marbul: marble OF marbre
marchal: marshal OF mareschal
marchant sb. merchant OF.
Marcia Catoun: Marcia, daughter
of Cato the Younger, refused to
remarry
Marcien: belonging to Mars
mareys: marsh OF marais
mariage: marriage; maad many a
marriage . . . at his owene cost]
arranged weddings OF.
mark: likeness, image AS mearc
D 696
mark: an English money of ac-
count, value 13s. 4d. AS marc
markys: marquis OF.
markysesse: marchioness
Mars: the god of war
Martes: poss. of Mars
martir: martyr; Thomas à Becket,
slain at Canterbury, 1170, by
emissaries of Henry II A 17
AS martyr
martirdom: martyrdom
martireth 3 pr. s. martyrs
marybones: marrow-bones
maryed 3 pt. s. married
maryneer: mariner OF marinier
mased: amazed, bewildered; cf.
Norw. masast "to fall asleep"
masse: mass, eucharist OF.
Massynisse: Massinissa, king of
Numidia, ally of Rome
mast: mast, acorns, beechnuts
AS mæst f.
maste: mast (of a ship) mæst m.
mastresse; cf. maistresse
mat: exhausted; cf. maat
mate: checkmate; exhausted; cf.
check
mateere, matere: matter, business,
subject OF matiere
Mathew: the "gospeller," who

gives the words "swear not at all" (v. 34)

matrimoigne: matrimony OF *matrimoine*

matyns: matins, prayers OF *matines*

Maudelayne, Maudeleyne: a corruption of Magdalen

maugree: in spite of OF

maumetrie: Islam, Mohammedanism

maunciple: manciple, or steward of an inn of court or a college OF *manciple*

Mauricius: son of 'Alla and Constance

mawe: stomach AS *maga m.*

mawgree: in spite of; mawgree my hede] in spite of all I could do OF.

Maximus: a Roman officer

may: maiden AS *mæg*

mayde sb. maid, maid-servant AS *mægden*

mayde a. unmarried, chaste; (of man or woman) AS *mægden* D 79

mayden: maid; **maydenys pl.**

maydenhede, maydenhod, maydynhed: maidenhood, chastity

mayme: injure OF *mahaignier*

maytene, maynteyne inf. maintain, carry out OF *maintenir* A 1441

mayst, maystow 2 pr. s. **may;** cf. *mow*

mayster sb. master

mayster a. master, chief

maystrye: token of mastery

maze: puzzling thing; cf. *mase*

mazednesse: amazement

mazelyn: maple-bowl; cf. *ODu*

maser "maple-excrescence"

me pers. pron., dat. and acc. to me, me

Mecene: Messene, a town near Sparta

meche, mechel: much; cf. *mochel*

mede, meede: mead, meadow AS *mæd f.*

mede: mead (drink) AS *meodo m.*

Medea: wife of Jason q. v. She helped Jason to obtain the Golden Fleece, and then fled

with him to Greece. By magic she restored Jason's father to youth. When Jason proved untrue to her, she slew her children, took vengeance on her rival, and returned to her home

medecyne sb. remedy OF

mediacion, mediacioun: mediation, intercession OF

medlee a. medley, of mixed stuff or color OF *medlee*

meede sb. reward AS *mæd f.*

Meede: Lucre

meeke: meek Scand.

meal: meal AS *melu*

meene inf. mean, intend, say; **mene** 1 pr. s.; **menyst** 2 pr. s.; **mente** 3 pt. s.; **ment pp.** AS *mæn* "tell"

meenewhile: meanwhile

meeste: greatest (in rank)

meeth: mead (drink) AS *meodu*

meetre: metre, verse OF

meignee: army; cf. **meynee** OF *maisnie* B 3532

mekly: meekly

meknesse: meekness

Melan: Milan

melancolye: melancholy, sadness OF *melancolie*

Meleagree: Meleager, Grecian hero, organized the Calydonian boar-hunt

meles pl. meals, repasts AS *mæl n.*

Melesie: maidens of Miletus, in Asia Minor

melle: mill AS *mylen*

melodye: melody, music OF

membre: member, part OF

memorial: preserving memory OF

memorie: memory; in *memorie*] conscious OF

memoyre: memory, recollection OF *memoire*

mencioun sb. mention OF *men-tion*

mene a. middle; **meene weyes:** middle course OF *meien*

mente 3 pt. s. **meant;** cf. **meene;** **ment pp.**

menyst 2 pr. s. **say, mean;** cf. *meene*

mercenarie: hireling Lat *mercenarius*

Mercurie: Mercury, patron of learning and of "clerks"; also the star Mercury, opposite in its exaltation and dejection to Venus

mercy interj. have mercy! OF Du 1218

mercyaible: merciful OF *merciabile*

mere: mare AS *mere* f.

mere: sea F *mer*

merite: recompense OF.

merk: image, form AS *mearc*

merlioun: merlin, a kind of hawk OF *esmerillon*

mermayde: mermaid

meroure, merour: mirror OF *mireor*

merthe: mirth, good cheer AS *myrgþ* f.

merveille, mervayles pl. wonder, strange circumstance, marvels OF.

merveillous: marvellous

mery a. merry AS *myrig*

mery ad. (ironically) finely

meschance: misfortune OF *mescheance*

mescheef, meschief: mishap, misfortune; at *meschief*] overcome, defeated OF.

message: message, messenger, prophet OF.

messenger: messenger

messagerye: message-sending

messedayes: mass-days

mester: occupation OF *mestier*

mesurable a. temperate OF.

measure s. moderation; by *measure*] moderately, to a proper extent OF.

met 3 pr. s. dreameth; cf. *mete*

met pp. dreamed; cf. *mete*

mete sb. meat, food; at *mete*] at the table AS *mete* m.

mete a. meet, fitting; no *mete*] no equal Du 488 AS *mæte*

mete inf. meet; **metryth** 3 pr. s.; **mette** pt. pp. AS *mētan*

mete inf. dream; **met, mette** pr. s.; **mette** pt.; **met** pp. AS *mētan*

Metellius: Metellius, said by Valerius Maximus to have killed his wife when drunk

Methamorphosios: the "Metamorphoses" of Ovid

methynketh: I think

metres: poetry OF.

mette 3 pt. pl., pp. *met*; cf. *mete*

mette pt. dreamed; cf. *mete*

metrynge sb. dreaming; *kynges metyng* Pharaos] the dream of King Pharaoh

metryth 3 pr. s. meets; cf. *mete*

meve inf. move OF *moveir*

mevid: proposed

mewe: perch or place for bird OF *mue*

meynee: household menials, servants, company OF *maisnie*

meyntenaunce s. demeanor OF *maintenance*

Middelburgh: a Dutch port on the island of Walcheren. The wool staple was situated here from 1384 to 1388, before and after which it was at Calais. This reference seems to date the writing of the prologue between 1384 and 1388

mille: mill AS *mylen*

millere: miller

ministre: servant, ruler; pl. officers OF.

mirour sb. mirror OF *mireor*

mirre: myrrh OF.

mis sb. wrong OF L 266

mis a. wrong

mishappe 3 pr. imper. mishap, go . wrong

misseyst 2 pr. s. speakest ill

miteyn: mitten OF *mitaine*

mo a. more, another; *tymes mo*] at other times AS *mā* n.

mo ad. more

moche sb. size AS *micel*

moche a., ad. much

modifie inf. modify OF *modifier*

modyr: mother AS *mōdor*

moebles: furniture OF *moble*

moerdre sb. murder AS *morðor*

moeved 3 pt. s. stirred OF *moveir*

moevere: mover, originator

moevyng: moving; *firste moevyng*] the *primum mobile*, or first (that is, ninth) sphere, in which all planets are carried in diurnal motion from east to west (Ptolemy)

mone sb. moon AS *mōna*
 mone sb. moan, complaint (? AS *mān* f.)
 moneie, moneye: money OF.
 monethe sb. month AS *mōnað* m.
 monstre: monster OF.
 montaigne: mountain OF.
 montance: amount, value OF.
 monthe: month AS *mōnað* m.
 mony: many AS *monig*
 moo: more; cf. *mo*
 mooder: mother; the earth C 729;
 cf. *modyr*
 moone sb. moon; phases of moon
 A 403; cf. *moon*
 moore a. more AS *māra*
 moorne 3 pr. s., pl. mourn; cf.
 morne
 moornynge: mourning
 moost: most, greatest
 moote 3 pr. s., 1 pr. pl. must;
 cf. *mot*
 moralitee: morality OF.
 mordre sb. murder AS *morðor*
 morder 1 pr. s. murder; mordred
 2 pt. pl. subj.; mordred pp. AS
 myrðrian
 mordrere: murderer
 mordrynge: murdering
 mortal sb. cancer, open sore OF
 mortmal
 morne sb. morning; morne milk]
 morning-milk AS *morgen* m.
 morne inf. mourn; moorne,
 moorneth pr. AS *murnan*
 Morpheus: the god of dreams, son
 of Somnus, god of sleep, some-
 times called the god of sleep
 mortar: mortar OF *mortier*
 northerere: murderer
 mortreux sb. a kind of stew or
 soup OF.
 morwe: morrow, morning; a
 morwe] in the morning; by the
 morwe] in the morning AS
 morgen
 morwenynge sb. morning
 morwe-song: matins A 830
 morwetyde: morning
 morwnyng: morning
 mosel: muzzle OF *musel*
 most, moste 1, 3 pt. s. must, might
 mot, mote 1 pr. s. must; mote,

moote 3 pr. s.; moote 3 pr. pl.;
 motyn 1 pr. pl. AS *mōt*
 mote sb. notes of horn OF *mot*
 motes sb. pl. motes, small par-
 ticles AS *mot*
 mottelee sb. motley, party-colored
 garb; cf. OF *motelet* "little
 clod"
 motthes: moths AS *moððe*
 motyf: idea OF *motif*
 motyn pr. pl. must; cf. *mot*
 mountaunce, mountenaunce:
 amount OF *montance*
 mous: mouse AS *mūs*, pl. *mȳs*
 moustre sb. pattern OF.
 mow 3 pr. pl. may; mowe pr. s.,
 pl.; maist 2 pr. s.; myght,
 myghten pr. AS *magan*
 mowled pp. mouldy, old; cf.
 mowlen < ME *moul* "mould"
 mowlen inf. grow mouldy orig.
 uncert.
 Moyses: Moses, in Jewish legend,
 had a ring causing forgetfulness
 F 250
 moyst, moyste: moist; cf. *humour*
 A 420; new; soft, not yet dried
 out and stiff A 457 OF *moiste*
 moysty: new (of ale)
 muche and lite: great and small
 muchel a. much
 muchel ad. much, greatly
 mullok: refuse heap < *mull* "dirt"
 multiplie inf. multiply; change
 metals alchemically G 669 OF.
 murie: merry AS *myrig*
 murier: more pleasant
 murierly ad. more merrily
 murmure sb. murmuring OF.
 murmureden pt. pl. buzzed, talked
 in low voice
 murmurynge: *murmur*
 murthe: mirth AS *myrgþ*
 mury, murye a. merry
 murye ad. merrily
 mused 3 pt. s. wondered, re-
 volved OF *muser* "loiter"
 musik: music OF *musique*
 muste 3 pr. s. must; cf. *mōt*
 mutabylyte: inconstancy OF.
 mutte 2 pr. pl. must
 muwe: coop for fattening fowl
 OF *mue*
 "My lief is faren in londe": first

line of an old song, "My love is gone to the country" B 4069
mychel: much AS micel
Mychelmesse: Michælmæss, September 29
myd a. mid, middle
Myda: Midas, king in Crete, famous for wealth and folly
myddell: mean, medium AS mid-del
mydnyght: midnight
myght sb. might, power; do youre myght] do all in your power AS miht f.
myght 1 pt. s. might; cf. mow
myghty: powerful
myht sb. might AS miht f.
myhten pt. pl. might; cf. mow
myle: mile AS mil f.
my lord: the archbishop of Canterbury, or perhaps the Pope B 4635
myn poss. mine
mynde: mind, understanding, memory AS gemynd
Mynerva: Minerva, Goddess of Wisdom
myn imp. have in mind AS gemyngian
Mynotaur: a monster, half-man and half-bull, which lived in the labyrinth in Crete. Athenian youths were doomed by him, until he was slain by Theseus
mynour: miner, sapper OF mineor
mynstralcie: minstrelsy, instrument OF menestralsie
mynstrales: minstrels OF menestrel
myracle; pl. **myraklis**: miracle; pleyes of myracles] miracle plays (of Biblical history) OF miracle
myre: mire, mud; cf. Icel mÿr
myrie a. merry AS myrge
myrthe: mirth AS myrgþ f.
myrtheles: mirthless
mys ad. amiss
mysaventure: mishap OF.
mysavyse 3 pr. pl. refl. are wrongly counseled OF.
mysboden pp. insulted, abused AS mis-bēodan
myscarie inf. miscarry, go amiss
myschefe: sorrow OF meschief

mysdeparteth 3 pr. s. wrongly divides
mysdooth 3 pr. s. mistreats
myselvyn: myself
myserie: misery OF miserie
mysfille 3 pt. s. it went amiss
myssayde pp. missaid
mysse inf., pr. s. fail, lack AS missan
myssette pp. misplaced, unsuitable
mysspeke 1 pr. s. subj. speak amiss
mystake pp. mistaken
myster: trade, craft; what myster men] what sort of men OF mestier
mystihede: mistiness, mystery
mystriste inf. mistrust
mysusen inf. misuse OF mesuser
myte: mite, little bit OF mite "small coin"
mytes: mites, small insects AS mite

N

na: no AS nā never
Nabugodonosor: Nebuchadnezzar
nacion: nation OF nation
nadderys: serpents AS nādre
naille 3 imp. s. nail up AS næg-lian
nailynge p. fitting with spikes
naked pp. as a. naked, bare, destitute, plain AS nacod
nakednesse: nakedness
nakerers: drums OF nacaire
nakyd: naked
nam for **ne** am: am not
namlie: namely, particularly AS nama + -ly
namo: no more
namoore: no more
napoplexie: nor apoplexy
nappeth: naps AS hnæppian
Narcisus: Narcissus, beloved by Echo, was punished for his neglect of her by becoming enamoured of the reflection of his own face in a fountain which he watched until he pined away and was turned into a flower
narette for **ne** arette: ascribe not
narowe: close AS nearu

nart for **ne art**: art not
narwe: narrow, close
nas for **ne was**: was not; I **nas**
 but] I was simply
nat: not
nath, nathe for **ne hath**: hath not
nathelees: nevertheless AS *nā*
 never
nativitee: birth OF.
nature: nature, race OF.
natureel, naturel: natural; naturel
 day] twenty-four hours; naturel
 magyk] cf. magyk OF naturel
navele: navel AS *nafela*
nawht: not AS *nāwiht*
nay a. as sb. untruth Du 147; cf.
Icel nei
nayl: nail, to catch and hinder
 one, a hindrance A 3877; pl.
 finger-nails C 651 AS *nægel*
ne: nor, not
necessarie: necessary act OF
necessaire
necessitee condicioneel: necessity
 which is conditioned only by
 knowledge not by compulsion,
 as when we see a man falling
 from a roof and know he will
 be killed B 4440
negligence: negligence OF *negli-*
gence
negligent: negligent OF *negligent*
nede sb. need, desire, peril AS
nēod f.
nede inf. need; **nedeth** 3 pr. s.;
nedest 3 pt. s. AS *nēodian*
nede ad. needs, of necessity AS
nēdes Du 1073
nedeles: needlessly
nedely: of necessity
nedes: needs, of necessity
nedescost: necessarily
nedles: poss. needle's AS *nādl*
nedys pl. needs; for *nedys*] of
 necessity
neede a. necessary
needfull: needy
neer ad. near AS *nēar*
neer ad. comp. nearer
neet sb. neat, cattle AS *nēat*
negardye: niggardliness
negh: nearly AS *nēh*
neighbore: neighbor AS *nēah-*
gebūr

nekke: neck AS *hnecca*
nekke-boon: spine
nel, nele for **ne wele**: will not
Nembrot: Nimrod, a "mighty
 hunter" in the Bible, and builder
 of Nineveh, Genesis x. 9
nempnen inf. call by name;
nempned 3 pt. s. AS *nemnan*
ner, nere for **ne were** pt. s., pl.;
 pt. subj. were not, should not
 be
ner ad. never, ne'er
ner, nēre ad. comp. nearer
nercotikes: narcotics OF *nar-*
cotique
Nero: emperor of Rome, famed
 for his cruelty
nerre: nearer
Nessus: a Centaur, killed by Her-
 cules
netheles: natheles
nette: net AS *nett n.*
neveradeel: not at all
nevew: nephew OF *neveu*
nevir: never
newe a. new AS *nīwe*
newe ad. newly
newed 3 pt. s., pp. renewed, was
 freshened
newefangel a. fickle
newefangelnesse: fondness for nov-
 elty, fickleness
next: next, nearest; next before]
 just before
neyghbur: neighbor AS *nēahge-*
būr
neythir: neither
Nicerates: Niceratus, a Greek
Nichanore: Nicanor, a Greek, gen-
 eral of Antiochus
niente: nothing Ital.
nil for **ne will**: will not
ninthe: ninth AS *nigoða*
nobil: noble OF *noble*
nobledest 2 pt. s. ennobled
noblesse: nobleness, rank, honor
 OF.
nobleye: nobility OF *nobleie*
nodde inf. nod, shake his head
 orig. uncert.
noe: no
nof, ne of: nor of
noght sb. nothing AS *nā wiht*
noght ad. not; not at all

noht ad. not, naught
 nolde for ne wolde: would not
 nombre: number OF.
 non: none AS nān
 nones sb. nonce, time-being ME
 for then ones < þam (dat. AS
 þe)
 nonne: nun AS nunne f.
 nonys adv. for the nonce; cf.
 nones
 noo: no
 noon: none AS nān
 noot for ne wot: know not
 noote: note, tune; by noote] ac-
 cording to musical note OF
 note
 norice sb. nurse OF nurrice
 norissed pp. raised OF nurir
 norisshyng: period of growth
 norissyng sb. nourishment, nutri-
 ment, rearing
 Northfolk sb. Norfolk, a county
 of England on the east coast
 (East Anglia)
 northren: northern
 norture: good manners OF norri-
 ture
 nosethirles pl. nostrils AS nosþyrl
 nost 2 pr. s. knowest not; cf.
 noot
 not for ne wot: does not know;
 cf. noot
 notabiltee: striking event OF.
 note: music, tune OF.
 notemuge: nutmeg ME note "nut"
 + OF mugue "musk"
 not-heed: close cropped head
 nother: neither; never nother]
 neither of them AS nōwðer
 nothyng ad. not at all
 notified pp. proclaimed OF.
 notys pl. notes
 nought: not
 noumberis: numbers, ratios OF
 nombre
 noumbre sb. and inf. number
 nouncertaine: uncertainty < non-
 certain
 nouth: neither AS nōwðer
 novelrie: variety OF novelerie
 noveltee: novelty OF.
 novys: novice OF.
 nowadayes: nowadays

nowches: brooch OF nusche
 "necklace"
 nowe: now; as nowel] now
 Nowel: Noel, birthday (of Christ)
 nowght: not
 nowher: nowhere
 nowthe: now; as nowthe] at pres-
 ent AS nūðā "now then"
 noyse: noise OF.
 nuwefangulnesse: fickleness
 ny: nigh AS nēh
 nyce: ignorant, foolish, without
 malice; careful A 398 OF nice
 < Lat nescius
 nycete s. folly
 nygard: niggard, stingy one OF.
 nygh, nyghe ad. nigh, nearly OF
 nēh
 nyght, nyghte sb. night AS
 neaht, niht f.
 nyghte inf. become night
 nyghtertale: night time; cf. Icel
 nätterþel
 nyghtyngale: nightingale AS
 nihtegale
 nyhtyngale: nightingale
 nyghtys pl. nights
 nyl for ne wyl: will not
 nymphes: nymphs Lat nympha
 nyn: nor in
 nyne: nine AS nigon
 nynetene: nineteen AS nigontýne
 Nynve: Ninaveh, ancient capital
 of Assyria
 nys for ne is: is not
 nysete: foolishness
 nyste for ne wyste: did not know

O

o: of L 360
 o: one AS ān
 obeieþ 3 pr. pl. obeys; cf. obeye
 OF obeir
 obeisant: obedient
 obeisaunce, obeissaunce: obedi-
 ence; in your obeisaunce] obedi-
 ent to you
 obeye inf., 3 pr. pl. obey; obeyde
 3 pt. OF obeir
 obligacioun: a bond OF obliga-
 tion
 observaunce: respect, homage, cer-
 emony OF observance

observe inf. favor, allow OF observer Lat observare
obstinat: obstinate Lat obstinatus
Occident: west
occupye inf. occupy; occupieth 3 pr. s. OF occuper
octogamy: marriage of eight wives in succession < Jerome's treatise Advers. Jovinianum, "octogamos"
Octovyan: Augustus Cæsar, Octavian L 624
Octoven: an emperor of Rome who married Floraunce, daughter of Dagobert, king of France. He is the subject of an early English metrical romance Du 368
Odenake: Odenathus or Odenatus, king of Palmyra
of ad. off
of prep. in, with; of newe] recently
of caste imp. discard
offenden inf. offend
offensicun: harm OF.
offertorie: offertory Lat offertorium
office sb. secular employment
officere: officer; pl. servants OF.
offreth imp. pl. offer AS offrian OF offrir
offring sb. the proceeds of the voluntary offerings
offrynge: offering; in Chaucer's day the people carried their offerings to the altar, and questions of precedence arose A 450
offys: office, duty
of-showve: shove off, repel
ofspryng sb. offspring
oftaken pp. removed
ofte a. pl. many; ofte tyme] often AS oft
ofte ad. often
ofter: more often
oght sb. aught AS āwiht
oght 3 pr. s. ought AS āgan
oght ad. at all
oille sb. oil; oille of tartre] cream of tartar OF oille
ok(e): oak AS āc f.
olde: old AS ald
olifaunt: elephant OF olifant

Olofernus: Holofernes, captain of Nebuchadnezzar's army
olofte: aloft ME on lofte
olyve: olive OF.
Olyvere: Oliver, one of Charlemagne's Twelve Peers. Slain with Roland at Roncesvalles, through the treachery of Ganelon q. v. Du 1122
olyveres: olive-yards OF olivier
Omer: Homer
on prep. on, in; on alle thyngel at all cost; on shames deeth] a death of shame
on: one
onbyde: abide, wait
ones: once, united C 696; at ones] at once
onethe: scarcely; cf. unnethe AS unēaðe "un-easy"
onhap: misfortune
onknowyn: unknown
onkynde: unkind
on-lofte: aloft
on the: one of the (followed by superlative)
onstedefastnesse: unsteadfastness
onworthieste: unworthiest
ony: any AS ænig
oo: one; cf. oon
ook: oak AS āc f.
oold: old AS ald
oon: one; evere in oon] constantly; after oon] up to standard
oones: once
oonly: only
oonys: once
oore: ore AS ār m.
ooth: oath AS āð m.
oother: other
opene inf. open
openers: fruit of the medlar, not good to eat until it began to decay
open-heveded: bare-headed
operaciouns: operations, affects OF operation
opie: opium OF.
opposicioun: opposition (of sun and moon in sky in relation to earth) OF opposition
opposit: opposite OF opposit
oppress inf. oppress, violate OF oppresser

oppressyoun: oppression, tyranny
 OF oppression
opyn a. open AS open
or conj. before, ere, or
or prep. before
oratorie: oratory, small chapel OF
 oratorie
orde: point AS ord m.
ordenaunce: order OF.
ordeyned pp. ordained, arranged
 OF ordener
ordinance: arrangement; by ordi-
 nance] in order
ordre sb. order, religious order;
ordres foure] the four orders of
 begging friars were: the Domin-
 icans, or Black Friars; the
 Franciscans, or Grey Friars; the
 Carmelites, or White Friars; the
 Augustin Friars A 210 OF
 ordre
Orewelle: an early name for Har-
 wich, a seaport on the eastern
 coast of England
orgnes pl. organs, the earlier
 name for what we call an organ
 (cf. a bellows) AS organe
organ: organ B 4041
orient: the east
original sb. origin
orisoun: prayer OF orison
orizonte: horizon OF orizonte
Oriens: Orleans, seat of a uni-
 versity
orloge, orlogge: large clock OF.
ornementz: ornaments
Orpheus: legendary Greek musi-
 cian, whose music moved even
 stones and trees, and enabled
 him to descend with safety into
 the infernal regions in search of
 his dead wife, Eurydice. She was
 given permission to follow him
 back to earth, provided that he
 did not turn back to see whether
 she were following him. He was
 unable to refrain from looking
 back, whereupon Eurydice van-
 ished from his sight. While he
 was in Hades, his music gave
 temporary release from toil and
 punishment to all who heard it
Orygenes poss. Origen, 185-253
 A. D., church father, wrongly

thought to have written a treatise on Mary Magdalene
Osanne: Hosanna
ost: host OF.
otes: oats AS âte pl. âtan
other, othre: other; **otheres poss.**
 s.; **othere pl.** AS ôðer
other conj. either, or
ootherweys: otherwise
othes: oaths AS að m.
ouche: clasp, necklace, nouch OF
 nusche
ought sb. anything AS âwiht
oughte pr. pl., pt. s. ought
oughte ad. at all Du 536
ouhte 3 pr. s. ought
oule: owl; **oulys pl.** AS ûle
ounces: thin locks, parts OF once
oune: own AS âgen
oure: pron. our C 786
oures pl. hours OF heures
out interj. down with! B 4233;
 alas! B 4570
outbreke: break out, begin to speak
out caughte 3 pt. s. drew out
oute ad. out, uttered
outen inf. utter; **oute 1 pr. pl.**
 AS ütân
outerly: utterly, finally AS üttra
outhees: outcry AS üt + hæs
 "command"
outer: either, or AS âwðer
outlawe: outlaw AS ütлага
outrageous: insolent, reckless C
 650 OF outrageous
outraunce: the last extremity OF.
outrely ad. utterly, absolutely
outreys inf. exceed the proper
 bounds (?OF outreier)
outridere: outrider, whose business
 was to look after the outlying
 manors belonging to the mon-
 astery
outspronge 3 pt. s. spread abroad
outsterte 3 pt. pl. ran out
out-taken pp. excepted
utter: outer
outtreste: uttermost
outtwyne 2 pr. pl. twist out, utter
over: over, above
overal: everywhere
overborde: overboard AS ofer
 bord

overcaste inf. cast down
 overdoon pp. done to excess
 overest a. uppermost
 overlad pp. put upon, domineered
 AS oferlædan
 overlade inf. over load
 over-lippe: upper lip
 overmacche inf. overmatch
 overmeasure: to excess, in the extreme
 overryden pp. run over AS
 offeridan
 overshette pt. pl. over-run the
 scent ME oversheten
 overskippte 1 pt. s. skipped, passed
 over
 overslope: upper garment AS
 oferslop
 overspradde 3 pt. s. covered AS
 ofersprædan
 oversprynge pr. s. subj. flood
 overthwart, overthwert: across,
 askance
 overtoko pt. s. overtook, caught
 up
 ovireshake pp. shaken off
 Ovyde: Publius Ovidius Naso, gen-
 erally called Ovid, a Latin poet
 (B. C. 43-19? A. D.). His chief
 works are the *Metamorphoses*,
 a great source book of mythol-
 ogy; the *De Arte Amandi* (The
 Art of Love); and the *De Re-
 medio Amoris* (The Cure of
 Love). The two last named
 had great influence upon mediæ-
 val conceptions of love
 ovyræl: besides
 owene a. own AS âgen
 oweth 3 pr. s. owns
 owhere: anywhere
 owr, owre: our
 owter: over; cf. de F outre
 owtlandish: foreign
 owtrage: insolence, excess OF
 outrage
 oxe: ox; oxen pl. AS oxa
 oxe-stalle: ox-stall
 Oxenford: Oxford
 oynement: ointment OF oigne-
 ment
 oynons pl. onions OF oignon
 oystre: oyster OF oistre

P

paas: step, foot-pace; goon a paas]
 go at a foot-pace OF pas
 pace inf. pass, go, step, surpass
 OF pas
 Pacience pers. Patience
 patient sb. patient OF.
 patient a. patient
 Padwe: Padua, in northern Italy
 paiementz: payments OF paiement
 paire: pair OF.
 pak: lot; cf. Du pak
 Palamon: Theban noble, cousin of
 Arcite, in the Knight's Tale
 Palatye: Palathia in Anatolia or
 Asia Minor
 paleys: palace, mansion, or house;
 zodiacal sign astrologically ap-
 propriated to planet; in C M
 the mansions concerned are
 Gemini, Taurus, Aries; Venus
 and Mars meet in Taurus,
 Venus' mansion (?); Venus flees
 to Cylenius (Mercury's) "tour,"
 Gemini (113); Mercury beholds
 Venus from Venus' valance, the
 edge of Aries, fancifully called
 Venus' bed-curtains; Mars is left
 in Taurus by the more rapid
 motions of the other planets;
 the sun, Phœbus, entered Taurus
 April 12; C M 54
 palfrey: saddle-horse OF palefrei
 Pallas: Minerva goddess of wis-
 dom
 palled: pale OF pale
 palmeres: pilgrims who bear palm
 branches as signs that they
 have reached the Holy Land.
 Used by Chaucer more loosely
 as meaning a pilgrim OF pau-
 mier
 Palymerie: Palmyra
 Pamphilus: author of "*Liber de
 Amore*," a Latin poem, in ele-
 giac form, bewailing his love
 for Galatea
 pan: skull, crown of head AS
 panne
 Pan: Greek god of shepherds, and
 of nature in general. He is
 depicted as half-man, half-goat
 Panik: the location is uncertain

pantere: snare, bag-net OF pan-tiere

Pape: Pope

papejay: popinjay, green wood-pecker OF papegai

par amour: lovingly, with devotion OF.

par cas: perchance

paradys: paradise OF paradis

parage: parentage OF.

paramentz: fine mantles Lat paramentum

paramour sb. lover, mistress OF.

paramour, paramours ad. longingly, lovingly

parainter: perhaps OF par aventure

paraventure: peradventure, perhaps

parcel: part, small part OF par-celle

parde interj. OF par Dieu

pardoner: the business of the pardoner was to sell pardons or indulgences issued by the Pope. He carried relics to add credence to the pardons OF pardoner

pardon sb. pardon OF.

parementz: rich hangings; chambre of parementz] presence-chamber OF parent

parfay: by the faith OF B 110

parfit a. perfect; with regard to holy living. D 92 OF.

parfitly: perfectly

parfourne inf. perform; parfournest 2 pr. s.; parfourned pp. OF parfournir

Paris: son of King Priam of Troy; by his seduction of Helen, wife of Menelaus, he caused the Trojan war Du 331

parisshe: parish OF paroisse

parisshe ns sb. pl. parishioners OF paroissien

paritorie: pellitory, an herb OF paritoire

parlement: deliberative body; decision, as of such body OF.

Parnaso: Mt. Parnassus, sacred to Apollo, above Delphi

parte inf. share; parteth 3 pr. s. departs OF partir

Parthes: the Parthians, who lived

in the east borders of what is now Turkey

Parthonopee: Parthenopæus, one of the Seven against Thebes

partre: part, section; partial person A 2657 OF partie

partrich sb. partridge OF perdriz

party ad. partly OF parti

parvys sb. the church-porch of St.

Paul's, a common place for consultation OF.

Parys: Paris

pas sb. pace, yard OF.

passant: surpassing OF.

passen inf. surpass, pass over, omit; passed 3 pt. s.; passid pp.

OF passer

passid pp. passed; cf. **passen**

passioun: passion, suffering, martyrdom OF.

passyng a. surpassing

pastee: pasty OF pasté

patente: an "open" letter, conferring privilege OF patente

Pathmos: Patmos, the island upon which St. John spent his last days; cf. Rev. i. 9

patriarkes: patriarchs OF.

patrone s. pattern OF patron

patroun: patron

Paulus: Paul

paunche: belly OF panche

pavement: floor OF.

pay: advantage, liking; to pay] to advantage Pf 474 OF paie

paye inf. pay; payed 3 pt. s.;

payede pp. satisfied OF paier

payen a. pagan OF païen

payens sb. pagans

payndemayn: the finest and whitest bread OF pain + demaine "manorial" "private"

payne sb. pain OF peine

paynyth pr. s. takes pains; cf. **peyne**

payre sb. pair OF.

paysyble: peaceable OF paisible

pece: piece OF pièce

pecok a. peacock AS pēa "peacock"

Pedmark: Penmark, a promontory in Brittany, on the west coast

pees: peace OF pais

peignynge p. taking pains OF
 pener
 peire sb. string OF paire
 pekke imp. peck
 pelowe: pillow AS pyle
 Pemond: Piedmont
 penant sb. penitent, one doing
 penance OF.
 penaunce: penance OF.
 pencil: pencil, brush OF pincel
 Penelope, Penolopee: Penelope,
 wife of Odysseus, noted for her
 faithfulness to him during the
 ten years of his wanderings, in
 spite of the importunities of
 many suitors
 penoun: pennon OF penon
 pens: pence, money AS penig
 penyble: painstaking, eager to
 please OF penible
 peple: people, common people OF
 pueple
 perauntere: par aventure, perchance
 OF.
 peraventure: perhaps OF.
 Perce: Persia
 percely: parsley OF perresil
 percen inf. pierce; perseth pr. s.;
 perced pp. OF percer
 perchaunce: perhaps OF.
 perche: perch, roost OF.
 percyng: piercing; for percyngel
 to prevent piercing
 pere: peer, equal OF per
 peregryn: peregrine, foreign Lat
 peregrinus
 perfit: perfect OF.
 perfity: perfectly
 performen inf. perform, fulfill OF
 parfournir
 peril: danger; upon my peril] so
 far as I could help it OF.
 perilouse: perilous, dangerous
 perisse 3 pr. pl. perish OF périr
 perle: pearl OF.
 permutacioun: complete change
 OF.
 Perotheus: Pirithous, whom The-
 seus accompanied to Hades in
 an attempt to carry off Proser-
 pina
 perpetuely: perpetually OF per-
 petuel

perrie, perrye: jewelry, precious
 stones OF pierrerie
 pers sb. bluish-gray material OF.
 perseveraunce: perseverance, en-
 durance OF.
 perseverynge: perseverance
 Persiens: Persians
 persith pr. s. pierceth; cf. percen
 persone: person. OF.
 persoun: parson; persoun of a
 toun] parish priest OF persone
 perspectives: perspectives, lenses
 OF.
 Pertelote: the hen
 perturben 3 pt. pl. disturb OF
 pertourber
 pervers: perverse, headstrong OF.
 pes, pese: peace OF pais
 pestelence: pestilence, woe OF
 pestilence
 pesyn: pease AS pise, pl. pisan
 pet: pit AS pytt
 pete: pity; cf. pite
 petouse: piteous, sad
 petously: piteously
 Petrak: Petrarch
 Petro of Cipe: Pierre de Lusig-
 nan, king of Cyprus, killed 1369
 B 3581
 Petro: Pedro of Castile, ally of
 the Black Prince, killed 1369
 B 3565
 petyciouns: petitions OF.
 peyne sb. pain, grief, care, torture;
 nevere for to dyen in the peyne]
 never even in case of death by
 torture OF peine
 peyne inf. refl. take pains, en-
 deavor; payneth pr. s.; peyned
 pt. pp. OF pener
 peynte inf. paint, depict; peyntede
 3 pt. s.; do peynte] cause to be
 painted OF peindre, pp. peint
 peyntede 3 pt. s. painted; peyntede
 the leoun] Æsop tells of a man's
 picture of a man conquering a
 lion. A lion remarked, "We
 lions are none of us painters."
 peynture: painting OF.
 peyre sb. pair OF paire
 peytrel: poitrel, breast-plate of
 horse-armor OF peitral
 Phanye: daughter of Cræsus
 Pharao: Pharaoh

Phasifpha: Pasiphaë, queen of Crete, mother of the Minotaur, half-man, half-bull

Phebus: Phœbus Apollo

Phidoun: Phido, slain at banquet in Athens, under the thirty tyrants, B. C. 403 (this exemplum and those following from Jerome "contra Jovinianum")

Philippes: Philip's

Philistiens: Philistines

Phillis: cf. Phyllis

philosofre: philosopher OF philosophe

philosophie: philosophy, learning OF.

philosophre: philosopher, used in a double sense, for the alchemists called themselves philosophers. The clerk was no alchemist, and had little gold A 297

Philostrate: name assumed by Arcite

phisic, phisik: physic, medicine OF.

phisicien: physician, doctor OF.

phislyas: probably the shipman's error for physices, natural philosophy

Phitoun: the Python, killed by Apollo; Ovid "Metamorphoses I"

Phyllis: daughter of Sithon, king of Thrace, and betrothed to Demophoön, son of Theseus, king of Athens, slew herself when her lover, who had gone to Athens to arrange for the wedding, did not return at the appointed time

Pictagoras: Pythagoras of Samos, B. C. 550, a mathematician who constructed a philosophy based upon the numerical relations of things. He was the first to make a scientific study of sounds and harmony

Pierides: daughters of Pierus in Thessaly, who contended with the Muses

Piers: Pierce

pigges poss. pig's ME pigge

pighte 3 pt. s. pitched < picchen

Pigmalion: Pygmalion, Greek

sculptor, whose statue Galatea was given life

Pilates voys: a loud, boastful voice, like that of Pilate in the mystery plays

pilche: fur cloak or coat AS pylce

piled pp. scraggly, wanting hair AS pylan "peel"

piler, pilere sb. pillar OF A 2466

pilere a. used for pillars Pf 177

pilgrymage: pilgrimage; cf. OF pelegrinage

pilours: pillagers, robbers OF pil-leur

pilwe-beer: pillowcase ME bere "case"

pipen in an vvy-leef: whistle for it

pipere a. used for pipes Pf 178

Pirrus: Pyrrhus, son of Achilles

Pisces: the Fish, a sign of the zodiac, opposite Virgo

pistel: epistle (read in church service), a lesson AS pistol

pitaunce: mess of victuals OF pitance

pite, pitee sb. pity OF pité

pith: strength AS piða

pitous: piteous, kind OF pitos

pitously ad. piteously, sorrowfully

pitte: pit AS pytt

pittee: pity; cf. pite

place: manor house B 1910 OF.

plages: regions OF.

planete: planet OF.

plantayn: plantain OF.

plante sb. shoot AS plante D 763

plastres: bandages OF plastre AS plaster

plat: flat OF.

plate sb. flat, flat side OF.

plates: plates of iron, armor OF.

Plato: 427-347 B. C., Athenian philosopher

play, playe: sport, amusement, contrivance AS plega

playn, playne sb. the plain OF.

playn a. flat OF.

ple: plea, contention OF plet

pledynge s. strife OF plaidier

pleis pl. pleas; cf. ple

plentee: abundance; greet plentee] in great abundance OF.

plentevous sb. plenteous OF
plentious
plesance, plesaunce: pleasure, de-
light; desire of love Pf 389 OF
plaisance
plesaunt a. pleasant, good natured
OF plaisant
plesen inf. please; plesed pp. OF
plaisir
plesure: pleasure OF plaisir
plesynges: satisfactions
pletynge: disputing OF plaidier
play sb. play, trick, delusion AS
plega
play, pleye inf. play, jest; pleyde
pt., pp. AS plegan
pleyn a. plain, open, fair, full;
pleyne pl. smooth Pf 180 OF
plain
pleyn ad. plainly, fully
Pleyndamour: the probable hero of
a metrical romance which has dis-
appeared
pleyne inf. complain; pleynes pl.
OF plaindre
pleynge p. amusement, sport
pleynly: plainly
Pleynt of Kynde: "De Planctu
Naturæ," nature's complaint
against unnatural vices; cf.
Alain
pleynte: plaint, complaint OF
plainte
pleynyng: complaining, lamenting
pleynge: playing, amusement
plighte 3 pt. s. pulled ME
plicchen < AS plyccan "pluck"
plighte: plighted, pledged D 1051
AS plihtan
plite sb. plight AS pliht m.
plogh, plowh sb. plough AS plōh
plowman: husbandman, small
farmer, who did his own plough-
ing
Pluto: god of the lower world
plye inf. bend OF plier
plyt: plight, woe AS pliht m.
poete: poet OF poete
poetrie: poetry OF.
poilleys: of Apulia, a district in
southern Italy
point devys: at, perfectly correct
pokkes: pox AS pocc
pokok: peacock AS pēa + cock

polax: pole-axe; cf. LG pollex
"poll, head" + ax
polcat: polecat; cf. F poule + cat
Polixena: Polyxena, loved by
Achilles, q. v.
Pollexene: cf. Polixena
Polymeia: Polymnia, muse of se-
rious song
polyve: pulley OF poulie
pomel: crown of the head OF
A 2689
pomely grey or grys: apple-gray,
dapple-gray OF pomele G 559
pompe: pomp, ceremony OF.
Pompeus, Pompeye: Pompey, who
married Cæsar's daughter and
(according to some historians)
whose daughter Cæsar married
Poo: the river Po
popeler: poplar OF poplier
Poper yng: Poperinghe, a town
near Ostend
popet: doll, used ironically OF
poupette
popynjay: parrot OF papegai
poraille sb. poor trash, the mob
OF povraile
Porcia: Portia
porpere: purple OF porpre
port: bearing, behavior OF port
A 69
portrayture s. painting, portrai-
ture OF.
portreitour: artist
portreitures: paintings
portrey inf. draw, depict OF
portraire
portreyynge sb. painting
pose: cold in the head AS gepose
pose 1 pr. s. put the case OF
poser
positif a. fixed OF.
possessioun: possession, wealth
OF.
possibilittee: possibility OF.
possyble: possible OF.
post: pillar, support OF poste
potage: broth OF.
pothecarie: apothecarie OF apote-
carie
pottes, pottis: pots AS pott
poudre-marchant sb. a flavoring
powder used in cooking in Chau-

cer's day; marchant "merchant's," hence "good"

Poul: St. Paul

poune: pawn in chess OF peon

pouped pp. blown

poure inf. pore, gaze; orig. uncert.

povre, povre a. poor OF povre

povertee: poverty

povre ad. poorly E 1040

povrelliche: poorly, in poverty

povrely: in poverty

pownage, pannage, food for swine OF pasnage

powped pt. pl. blew

poynaunt a. poignant, pungent OF poignant

poynt: point; in poynt] on the point of, ready; myd poynt] middle; in good poynt] well filled out OF.

poyson sb. poison OF.

praktike: practice OF pratique

praktisour sb. practitioner OF.

pray sb. prey, plunder OF preie

prayed inf. pray; pray 1 pr. s.; prayede pt. s. OF preier

preamble: introduction Lat preambulum

preambulacioun: preamble

preche inf. preach OF prechier

prechour: preacher OF precheor

predicacioun: sermon OF.

preef: talk, assertion; with yvel preef] bad luck to your talk D 24 ? OF pruef

pres sb. press, the crowd OF presse

preeseth 3 pr. s. presses

preest: priest AS prēost

preeve inf. prove OF prover

pref: proof ? OF pruef; cf. preef

prefectes poss. prefect's

preferre: be preferred to, better than OF préférer

preiede pt. s. prayed

preise inf. praise OF preisier

prelaat: prelate OF prélat

prenostik: prognostication, prediction Lat prænosticatus

prente sb. print; cf. F empreint

pres sb. press; forth in pres] press forward OF presse

prescience: foreknowledge OF.

prese inf. hasten, press on OF presser

presse sb. press; leyd in press] curled by tongs or curling-papers A 81; clothes-press FO 52; mould in which bell is cast A 263 OF.

prest sb. priest AS prēost

prest a. ready OF.

presumpcioun: presumption OF.

preve sb. proof OF pruef

preve inf. prove OF prover

prueve 3 pr. s.

prevely: privily OF privé

prevy a. privy, secret

prey, preye inf. pray; prey 1 pr. s.; preyen 1 pr. pl.; preyden 1 pt. pl. OF preier

preyere: prayer OF preiere

Priamus: Priam, king of Troy

Priapus: god of fruitfulness. For the story mentioned, Pf 255, see Ovid, "Fasti," 415

pridelees: without pride

prie inf. look, peer orig. uncert.

prikasour: a hard rider < AS prician

prike inf. incite, spur, urge AS prician

priking, prikyng sb. hard riding

prikke: point, prick, thrust AS pricca

principalle a. principal Du 1003

prioress: a nun next in rank to an abbess OF.

pris sb. price, estimation, worth OF.

prisoun: prison OF prison

privee: private, personal, attendant OF privé

prively: secretly

privetee: secrets OF priveté

procede inf. proceed OF proceder

proces, processe: course, passage of time, long story OF proces

processiouns: religious processions OF.

profre sb. offer AF profrer

profren inf. proffer; profre 2 pr. pl.; profred pp. AF profrer

profyt: profit OF profit

progressiouns: progressions, developments Lat progressio

- prohemye: proem, introduction
 Lat proœmium
 prolixitee: long-windedness OF.
 proporcioned pp. built in proportion OF.
 proporcionels convenientz: fitting proportionals, tables of fractions of the year
 proporcioun: calculation of ratios OF.
 propre: own, peculiar, individual, special OF.
 properly: properly
 proprete: property, right OF.
 prosperite: prosperity OF.
 proteccioun: protection OF protection
 protestacioun: protestation OF.
 Protheselaus: a Greek at Troy
 proverbe: proverb OF.
 provost: magistrate OF.
 prow sb. advantage OF prou
 prowess: valor, excellence OF proesce
 Pruce: Prussia. English knights frequently helped the Teutonic knights against the Lithuanians and Russians
 prudeest: proudest AS prüt
 Pruys: Prussia
 pry inf. pry, peer orig. uncert.
 pryme: prime, 6-9 a. m. OF prime
 prymer: primer OF premier
 prynses: princes OF princesse
 prys: esteem, renown; sovereign prys] unusual renown OF pris
 prysoun: prison OF prison
 pryve a. secret
 pryvee ad. secretly; pryvee and apert] in private and openly
 pryvee sb. privy OF prive
 pryvely: secretly
 pryvetee: privacy
 Ptholomee: Ptolemy, early geographer, misquoted by Wife of Bath
 publiced pp. made public, proclaimed OF publier
 Puella and Rubens: two astrological figures
 pul sb. pull, try Pf 164 AS pullian
 pulle inf. pluck, cheat AS pullian
 pulpet: pulpit Lat pulpitum
 pultrye: poultry OF pouleterie
 purchace inf. buy, obtain OF purchacier
 purchas sb. gain, from begging A 256 OF pourchas
 purchasour: conveyancer
 purchasyng sb. conveyancing, transference of property
 pure a. pure, natural; very, utterly; the pure death] death itself OF pur
 pure ad. entirely
 pured pp. refined
 purely; purely, totally
 purgatorie: purgatory Lat purgatorium
 purpos: purpose; to purpos ot] à propos OF pourpos
 purs: purse AS purs
 pursute: pursuit, hue-and-cry OF poursuite
 purtreys inf. draw OF pourtraire
 purveiaunce: providence OF porveance
 purvey inf. provide OF porveeir
 put inf., 3 pr. s., pp. put, present; putte 3 pt. s.; cf. AS putung "instigation"
 Pycardie: a province of France on the English Channel
 pye sb. pie (? OF pie)
 pye sb. magpie OF pie
 pyk: pike AS pic
 pykepurs: pick purse, pickpocket
 pyler: pillar OF piler
 pyn sb. pin AS pinn
 pynche inf. find fault with (?) OF pinchier
 pyncched pp. arranged in plaits
 pyne: pain, suffering, passion AS pin f.
 pyne inf. torture, harm AS pinian
 pynnes sb. pins
 pype inf. pipe, play the pipe < AS pipe
 pypes: pipes
 Pyramus: lover of Thisbe, slew himself when he found her robe torn by a lion

Q

quad, quade: evil < Flemish
quaad
quaille sb. quail OF.
quakynge p. quaking, trembling
AS cwacian
qualm: pestilence AS cwealm
quantite: size OF.
quarter: fourth part of night Du
198 OF quartier
quaylis poss. pl. quails'
queene: queen AS cwēn f.
queerne: mill AS cweorn f.
quelle subj. slay AS cwellan
queme inf. please AS cwēman
quene: queen, quean AS cwēn f.
querne: hand-mill AS cweorn f.
questio quid juris: the question is,
what is the law?
question: question, dispute Lat
questio
queynte 3 pt. s. went out, was
quenched; queynt pp. AS
cwencan < cwincan
queynte a. prudent; ingenious,
elegant, neat, affected, odd OF
cointe
quite inf. release, ransom, requite;
quitith 3 pr. s.; quite pp.; quite
hir while] pay her for it; quite
yow youre meede] reward you
OF quiter
quitty ad. freely, wholly
quite: 1 pt. s. paid back; cf.
quite
quod pt. s. said AS cweðan, pt.
cwaed
quook 3 pt. s. quaked, shook
AS cwacian
quoth pt. s. said
quyk, quyke a. lively, alive AS
cwic
quyken: bring alive, come to life;
quyked 3 pt. s. AS cwician
quyknesse: liveliness
quyk-silver: quick-silver, mercury
quyrboilly: cuir bouilli, leather
soaked in hot water and pressed
into shape, becoming stiff on
drying
quyte inf. requite, reward; cf.
quite

R

Rachel: Rachel, "weeping for her
children" Matt. ii. 18
rad pp. read; cf. rede
radde 3 pt. s. advised; cf. rede
Radix malorum est cupiditas: love
of money is the root of ills (1
Tim. vi. 10)
rage sb. frenzy, fierce blast A
1985 OF.
rage inf. romp, toy wantonly
OF ragier
ragerye: wild spirits OF ragerie
rakil: rash
rakelnesse: recklessness
rake-stele: rake-handle AS stēl f.
ram: a ram was the usual prize at
wrestling matches AS ramm
Ram: one of the signs of the
zodiac. In Chaucer's day the
sun entered the Ram (Aries) on
March 12, and left it on April
11. The half course refers to
the half of April which is in
Aries, the other half being in
Taurus. The year began in
March, hence the phrase, yonge
sonne. Skeat gives April 16,
1387, as the probable date of the
meeting of the pilgrims A 8
rampeth 3 pr. s. rush about OF
ramper
ransake inf. ransack, search; cf.
Icel raunsake "search a house"
rape sb. haste; cf. Icel hrapa
"hasten"
rasour: razor OF rasor
rather: sooner; never the rather]
none the sooner; more willingly
AS hraðor
raughte 3 pt. s., pl. reached; cf.
reche
raunson, raunsoun: ransom OF
rançon
ravenes poss. raven's AS hræfn
ravyne: rapine, prey, greed OF.
ravysedest 2 pt. s. didst draw
down OF ravir
ravyshyng: ravishing
rayed pp. striped OF rai
raysoun: reason; cf. resoun OF
raison

Razis: Rhazes, Arabian physician of the tenth century
real: royal OF reial
realte: royalty OF roialte
reawme: realm, kingdom, OF reialme
rebellyng sb. rebellion
recche 1 pr. s. reck, care; **reccheth** 3 pr. s.; **roghte, rought** 3 pt. s. AS **reccean**
recche: read, interpret (or make capable of interpretation) AS **reccean**
reccheless: careless, neglectful
receyven inf. accept OF **receivre**
rechased pp. headed off and driven back OF **rechasser**
reche inf. reach; **raughte** 3 pt. s., pl. AS **rācan**
recheles: reckless
rechelesnesse: recklessness
reclayme inf. reclaim, check OF **reclamer**
recomandeth 3 pr. s. reflex. commands OF **recommander**
recomende inf. give in charge, commend
reconforte inf. comfort again OF **reconforter**
recorde sb. report, testimony OF **record**
recorde 1 pr. s. record, remind OF **recorder**
recoverede pp. gained, won OF **recoverer**
red, rede, reed, sb. advice, help, comfort AS **rād m.**
red, rede a. red AS **rēad**
red pp. read; cf. **rede**
redde 3 pt. s., pp. read; cf. **rede**
redour: violence OF **reidour**
rede inf., 1 pr. s. read, advise, interpret; **radde, redde** 3 pt. s.; **rad, red, redde** pp.; **sweven redel** interpret the dream AS **rādan**
redelees, redelesse: without rede or counsel, perplexed; **redeless of peyne** without remedy for sorrow
redere: reader
redily: quickly
redith 3 pr. s. reads; cf. **rede**
redoutynge: reverence, religious fear OF **redouter**

redresse sb. redress OF **redresser**
redresse inf. redress
redy a. ready AS **rāde**
reed sb. advice, plan **rād m.**
reed sb. adviser A 665
reed a. red AS **rēad**
refresshen inf. refresh OF **refreschier**
refreyde pp. cooled down OF **refreidier**
reft pp. taken from; cf. **reven**
refuseded 3 pt. pl. disobeyed OF **refuser**
refut: refuge OF **refuite**
regalye: rule, authority OF **regalie**
regard: at regard of] in comparison with OF.
regioun: region OF **region**
registre: record OF.
regne: realm, rule, power OF.
regneth 3 pr. s. rules, reigns;
regnen 3 pr. pl.; **regned** pp. OF **regner**
reherce, rehersin inf. rehearse, repeat OF **rehercier**
rehersyngys: repetitions
rejoysed 1 pt. s. refl. rejoiced
rejoysynge: cause of rejoicing OF **resjoir**
rekene inf. pay the reckoning AS **gerecnian** B 110
rekene inf. reckon
rekenynge: reckoning, account; **ther lyeth in rekenynge inne my sorwe for no thyngel** There is nothing owing me (in **rekenynge**) in my sorrow, i.e. sorrow has paid me in full Du 698-9; **maad our rekenynges** paid our bills
rekke inf., 2 pr. pl. reck, care for AS **reccean**
rekne 1 pr. s. reckon; cf. **rekene**
relayes pl. relays, fresh sets of dogs OF **relai**
relees: cease; out of relees] without ceasing OF **reles**
relesse inf., 1 pr. s. release OF **relaissier**
releve: relieve OF **relever**
religioun: religion OF.
relikes: relics OF **relique**
remedies pl. remedies, cures; rem-

edies of love; remedies of Ovyde; cf. Ovyde OF.
remembraunce: remembrance
remembre imp. remember OF
 remembrer
remembrynge: calling to mind
remenant, remenaunt, remenent:
 rest, remainder OF remenant
remes: realms OF reialmes
remewed pp. moved away
remoeve 2 pr. pl. subj. remove
 OF remouvoir
renagat: renegade Lat renegatus
reneye: deny faith; **reneyed** pp.
 OF reneier
renes: ranks, rows OF renc
renne inf. run, go; turn up B
 125; **renneth, rennyth** pr. s.;
ronnen 3 pt. pl.; **ronne** pp. AS
 rinnan
rennere: runner
rennyng: running
rennyth 3 pr. s. runs; cf. renne
renomée: renown OF renome
renoun sb. renown, glory OF
 renon
renoveleth imp. pl. renew OF
 renoveler
rente sb. income, tax, tribute
 OF.
rent 3 pr. s. rendeth; **rente** 3
 pt. s.
rentyng: tearing AS rendan
repair sb. expense of repair OF
 repaire
repaire inf. return OF reparer
repeireth 3 pr. s. returns
repentaunce: repentance OF.
repentaunt: repentant OF.
repente inf. repent OF repentir
replecioun: repletion OF reple-
 tion
replete: replete, full OF replet
replicacioun, repplicacioun: means
 of reply OF replication
reporten inf. report OF reporter
reportour: reporter
repreeve: reproof OF reprueve
repreve inf. reproach, reprove OF
 reprover, 3 pr. s. reprueve
reproveable: blameworthy
reputacioun: reputation OF repu-
 tation

requere inf. seek, demand OF
 requerre
requeste sb. request OF requeste
 A 1204
rescous: rescue, attempt to rescue
 OF rescousse
rese inf. shake AS ræsan
resigne: resign OF resigner
reson, resoun: reason, opinion,
 right OF raison
resonable: reasonable, sensible, en-
 dowed with reason OF.
resouneth 3 pr. s. resounds OF
 resoner
respit: respite, delay, time OF
 respit
respiten inf. respite, gain time;
 refuse An 259 OF respitier
reste sb. rest, repose; at restel
 comfortable AS rest
reste inf. rest AS restan
resteles: restless
restoore 1 pr. s. restore OF
 restorer
restreyne inf. restrain OF re-
 streindre
restyng place: dwelling
retenue: retinue, suite OF retenue
rethor: one skilled in rhetoric Lat
 rhetor
rethorik: rhetoric OF rhetorique
retourneth imp. return OF re-
 tourner
retournyng sb. return
retracciouns: retractions OF re-
 traction
reule sb. rule of discipline OF
 reule
reulen inf. rule; refl. conform in
 conduct OF rieuler
reuthe: pity; cf. routhe; cf. AS
 hrēow
reutheles: ruthless
reve: bailiff, agent of manor AS
 geræfa
revelour: reveler OF reveler
reven inf. rob, take away, bereave
 AS rēafian
rever: river OF riviére
revers: reverse OF.
revith: reaves, snathes; cf. **reven**
revolucioun: orbit of stars
reward: regard OF.
rewde: rude OF rude

rewe sb. row AS *rāw* f.
 reweful: in sorrow
 rewefulleste: most sorrowful
 rewel-boon: whale-ivory; cf. OF
 rochal
 rewen inf. rue, take pity AS
 hrēowan
 rewles: rules
 reyn sb. rain AS *regn*
 reynes sb. reins OF *rēne*
 Reynes: Rennes, a town in Brit-
 tany; clothe of reynes] linen
 cloth made in Rennes Du 255
 reyneth 3 pr. s. rains
 reysed pp. made expeditions A 54
 cf. Ger *reisen*
 reysed pp. raised; cf. Icel *reisa*
 riall, rialle: royal OF *reial*
 ribaudye: ribaldry OF *ribauderie*
 ribbes: ribs AS *rib*
 riche: rich people A 248 AS *rice*
 richely: richly
 richesse: wealth; the porter of
 Venus OF *richesse*
 ride inf. ride, go on expedition;
 riden pr. pl., pt. pl., pp.; rit pr.
 s., pt. s; rood 3 pt. s. AS *ridan*
 right sb. justice AS *riht*
 right a. right; as it were right]
 exactly as if it were
 right ad. right, exactly; right
 thus] just so
 rightful: righteous
 rightwisnesse: righteousness
 rihte: right
 rihtful: rightful, proper
 riotour: rioter OF.
 rist pr. s. riseth; cf. *ryse*
 rit pr. s. rideth; pt. s. rode; cf.
 riden
 ro: roe, deer AS *rā*
 robbour: robber OF *robeor*
 roche: rock OF *roche*
 the Rochele: La Rochelle, a town
 in France
 rode sb. complexion AS *rudu* f.
 rode sb. rood, cross AS *rōd* f.
 Rodogone: Rhodogune, daughter
 of Darius, slew her nurse who
 counseled remarriage
 rodok: robin AS *rudduc*
 rody: ruddy, rosy AS *rudig*
 rof 3 pt. s. stabbed

Roger: Ruggiero degli Ubaldini,
 enemy of Ugolino B 3606
 roghte 3 pt. s. affected, cared; cf.
 recche E 685
 roial a. royal OF.
 roialliche ad. royally
 rokke: rock
 rolleth 3 pr. s. turns over OF
 roller
 rollynge p. rolling, shifty
 romaunce: romance, story OF.
 Romaunce of the Rose: an alle-
 gorical French love poem en-
 titled "Le Roman de la Rose,"
 written by Guillaume de Lorris
 and Jean de Menn, in the thir-
 teenth century. In the poem
 the loved one is a Rose in a
 beautiful garden; the lover at-
 tempts to pluck the Rose, but is
 hindered by allegorical figures,
 as Shame and Jealousy. Chau-
 cer speaks of translating this,
 (Prol. to Leg. G. W.) and a
 translation, part of which may
 be by Chaucer, is included in
 all complete editions of his works
 Romayn a. Roman
 rombled 3 pt. s. shouted out; cf.
 Du *rommelen*
 romed pp. roamed; cf. *romen*
 romen inf. roam, walk; rome 1
 pr. pl.; romede 1 pt. s.; romed
 pt., pp. orig. uncert.
 Romulus: founder of Rome, son
 of Rhea Silvia
 romynge p. roaming
 ronge 3 pt. s., pl. rang; cf. *rynge*
 ronne pp. run, completed; cf.
 renne
 Ronyan: Ronan, a saint
 rood 3 pt. s. rode; cf. *riden* A
 169
 roode: rood, cross AS *rōd*
 roode-beem: beam supporting rood
 or cross, over choir entrance
 roofe: roof AS *hrōf*
 roore inf. roar AS *rārian*
 roos 3 pt. s. rose; cf. *ryse*
 roost sb. roast OF *rostir*
 rooste inf. roast; rosted pp.
 roote: root; astronomical property
 of birth of rich; rootes pl. roots;
 given tabulated quantity, be-

longing to a fixed date, from which calculations are made AS
rôt
ropyn pp. reaped AS ripan
roreth 3 pr. s. roars; cf. roore
rose and lillie: flowers of martyrdom and chastity G 27
rosted pp. roasted; cf. rooste
rote sb. fiddle A 236 OF rote
rote sb. repetition; by rote] by heart orig. uncert.
roten, roton a. rotten; cf. Icel rotinn
Rouchestre: Rochester
rougte: 3 pt. s. recked, cared; cf. recche
rouketh 3 pr. s. cowers orig. uncert.
roule: roll, rāmbles, gad OF rouler
Rouncivale: some cell in England dedicated to the Blessed Mary of Rouncevaux
rouncy: hackney, nag OF ronci
rounde a. round OF ronde
rounde ad. round, easily B 2076
roundele: roundel, a form of French verse, rhyming abbaab abbaab (and in other ways) OF rondel
route sb. rout, throng, company OF.
route inf. snore Du 172 AS hrūtan
route inf. assemble B 540 OF route
routhe: pity; cf. hrēow
routelees: ruthless
rowe: row AS rāw f.
rowes pl. rays, beams
Rowlande: Roland, nephew of Charlemagne and chief of his Twelve Peers. He died at Roncesvalles through the treachery of Ganelon, q. v.
rownde: round OF ronde
rowne inf. whisper AS rūnian
rowthe: ruth, sorrow, pity; cf. AS hrēow f.
rubeis, rubyes: rubies OF rubis
rubriche: rubric, rule OF rubriche
Ruce: Russia
rude: common OF.
rudeliche: rudely
ruest: takest pity AS hrēowan

Rufus: Greek physician of Ephesus
rum, ram, ruf: alliterative sounds
rumbel, rumbul: rumbling, noise, rumor; cf. Du rommelen
rused pt. s. roused, got away AS hrēosan "rush"
Russell: the fox OF roussel "red"
russhyng p. rushing; cf. Du ruischen
Russye: Russia
ruste inf. rust AS rustian
ruyne sb. ruin OF ruine
ryal: royal OF reial
ryche: rich AS rice
rychesse: wealth OF richesse
ryde inf. ride; ryden 1 pt. pl.; cf. riden
ryght sb. right; by ryght] justly AS riht
ryght a. right, proper
ryght ad. exactly
rym sb. rime OF rime
ryme inf. rhyme; rymeyed pp. OF rimer
rynge: ring, resound; ryngen 3 pr. pl.; ronge 3 pt. s., pl. AS hringan
rynges sb. rings
rype: ripe, mature AS ripe
ryse inf., pr. pl. subj. rise; rist pr. s.; roose pt. s.; rysen pp. AS risan
rysen pp. risen; cf. ryse
ryte: rite Lat ritus
ryve inf. tear, cut open; cf. Icel rifa
ryver: river OF riviere

S

sacrifice imp. sacrifice OF sacrifier
sacrifise sb. sacrifice OF sacrifice
sad, sadde: patient, serious, sober AS sād
sadel: saddle AS sadol
sadel-bowe: saddle-bow
sadly: seriously, deeply, plentifully
sadsnesse: patience
saffron inf. to give color and savor, as with saffron OF safraner
saffroun: saffron OF safran
saille inf. sail AS seglian
Salamon, Salomon: Solomon

salewede 1 pt. s. greeted OF
saluer
Saluces: Saluzzo
salue inf. greet; salueth pr. s.
OF saluer
saluyng: greeting
salwes: willow twigs, osiers AS
sealh m.
Samaritan: the woman of Samaria
Sampson, Sampsoun: Samson, a
judge of Israel, famous for his
supernatural strength. As a
Nazarite, he drank no wine.
After his betrayal by Delilah,
when his strength returned he
caused himself to be led between
the two main pillars of the tem-
ple of Dagon, in which the lords
of the Philistines were feasting.
By thrusting the pillars out of
place he caused the temple to fall,
slaying himself and thousands of
the Philistines; cf. Judges xvi.
sangwyn sb. sanguine color, blood-
red cloth OF sanguin
sangwyn a. ruddy
sanz: without
sapience: wisdom OF.
Sapor: the first, king of Persia 240-
273. He defeated Emperor Vale-
rian, and in turn was defeated by
Zenobia and Odenatus
sarge: serge OF serge
Sarray: Sarai, a city near the Cas-
pian Sea, seat at one time of
the Tartar kings
sarvant: servant OF servant
Satalye: Attalia or Adalia, in Asia
Minor, captured in 1357
sate pt. s. sat; cf. sitten; doune
on knees sate] knelt; sate hyr
ful lytel at herte] troubled her
little
Sathanas: Satan
Saturne: the planet Saturn was
supposed to exert an evil in-
fluence
Saturnus: the father of Jupiter
and the gods. His planet was
supposed to have a baleful in-
fluence upon men and events,
causing strife and trouble
satyn: satin OF satin
sauf: saved, excepted OF.

saufly: safely
saugh 3 pt. s. saw; cf. se
sautrie sb. psaltery, a stringed
instrument OF psalterie
savacyoun: salvation OF sauva-
cion
save: the herb sage Lat salvia
save prep., conj. save, except OF
sauf
save inf., 3 pr. s. subj. save;
savith 3 pr. s.; savedest 3 pt. s.;
saveth imp. pl. OF sauver
savedest 3 pt. s. saved; cf. save
saveour: savior OF sauveur
savith 3 pr. s. saves; cf. save
savoure inf., imp. taste OF
savourer
savouris: smells Pf. 274
savyng p. keeping inviolate
savyng prep. saving, except
sawcefleem a. covered with pimples
OF saus "salt" + flemme
sawe sb. saying, maxim AS
sagu f.
sawe 1 pt. s. saw; cf. se
sawse: sauce OF saussie
say pt. s. saw (probably Chaucer's
regular form, as it occurs in
rime); cf. se
sayede pt. s., pp. said; cf. saye
saylyng a. sailing, used in ships
sayn, sayne inf. say; cf. seye
sayn pp. seen; cf. se
Sayne: the Seine
scabbe: scab Icel skab
scalle: scab; cf. Icel skalli "bald"
scalled pp. scabby
scapen inf. escape OF escaper
scarsly ad. economically A 583;
scarcely B 3602
scathe sb. misfortune; that was
scathe] that was a pity Icel
skaði f.
Scedasus: a native of Bœotia, in
Greece
schap: shape AS sceap
schape pp. ordained AS scieppan,
pp. sceapen
sche: she
scherte: shirt AS scyrte
scherynge: shearing AS sceran
schete inf. shoot AS scēotan
schethe sb. sheathe AS scēð f.
schette 3 pt. s. shut; cf. shetten

schewid: shown; cf. shewe
 schop 3 pt. s. refl. prepared; cf. shape
 schryne: shrine AS scrīn
 schul 3 pr. pl. shall; cf. shal
 science: knowledge, science OF.
 Scipioun: (1) Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus, Roman general and conqueror of Carthage in Africa, B. C. 202, whence his name Affrikan. (2) Cornelius Scipio Æmilianus Africanus Minor, the hero of the Third Punic War, whose dream of his grandfather by adoption, the elder Africanus, is discussed by Macrobius, q. v.
 Scithero: Cicero; cf. Tullius
 Scithia: Scythia, ancient country around the Black Sea
 sclat: slate OF esclat
 slaundre sb. slander, evil report OF esclandre
 sclendre: slender; cf. ODu.
 Scogan: tutor to Henry IV's sons
 scole: school, style AS scolu f.
 scole-matere: subject for scholastic disputation
 scoler: scholar, student
 to scoleward: on the way to school
 scoleye inf. go to school. It was customary for poor students to beg money for their education, even going from door to door; cf. OF escoler "teach"
 scorpioun: scorpion OF.
 Scot sb. a common Norfolk name for a horse
 Scotlandward: towards Scotland
 Scottes: Scots
 scourging: scourging, disciplining OF escorgier
 scriveyn: scrivener OF escrivain
 se, see sb. sea AS sǣ f.
 se, seen, sen, seene, sene, seon inf. see; seen pr. pl.; sawe, saugh, say, seigh, seye, seyen, seyde, syen pt.; sayn, sene, seye, seyn pp. AS sēon
 seche inf. seek AS sēcan
 secounde: second OF seconde
 secre a. secret OF.
 secree sb. and ad. secret, secretly OF.

secreely: secretly
 secreenesse: secrets
 sed sb. seed AS sǣd n.
 sede inf. seed, give seed AS sǣdian
 seege: siege OF siege
 seeke: sick AS sēc
 seel sb. seal, print OF.
 seelde a. seldom AS seldan
 seen inf., 2 pr. pl. see; cf. se
 seene inf. see; cf. se
 seet 3 pt. s. sat; cf. sitten
 seeth 3 pt. s. boiled AS sēoðan
 seettes: seats; cf. Icel sæti
 seigh pt. s. saw; cf. se
 seillynge p. sailing
 sein inf. say; cf. seyn
 seint a. (seinte f. and appellative) holy; Saint OF saint
 Saint Beneit: St. Benet or Benedict, the founder of the Benedictine order of monks, died 542
 Saint Edward: Edward the Confessor
 Saint Jame: St. James, whose body was carried in a rudderless ship to Compostella, in Galicia
 Saint Julian: St. Julian was famous for providing good things for his votaries
 Saint Maure: St. Maur, a disciple of St. Benet
 Saint Nicholas: St. Nicholas, the boy-bishop and patron of school boys, showed marks of piety when in the cradle
 Saint Thomas: St. Thomas à Becket killed at Canterbury
 Saint Thomas of Ynde: The Apostle Thomas died in India. He is thus called to distinguish him from St. Thomas of Canterbury
 Sainte Loy: Loy < Eloy < Eligius. St. Eligius refused to take the oath when testifying, therefore an oath in his name was very mild, practically no oath, being, once removed, no oath at all
 Seinte Poules: St. Paul's Cathedral
 Seintes Legende of Cupide: The Legend of Good Women
 seintuarie: saint's relic OF saint-uair
 seistow 2 pr. s. sayest thou; cf. seye

seith 3 pr. s. says; for **mysseith**
3 pr. s. slanders B 3112; cf.
seye

sek, seke a. sick AS **sēoc**

sekenesse: sickness

seken inf., pr. pl. seek, visit;

soghte 3 pt. s. subj.; soughte
pp.; sowhte pt. pl. AS **sēcan**

selde: seldom AS **seldan** A 1539

seled: sealed OF **seeler**

selle inf. sell AS **sellan**

selleres pl. merchants

selve a. own, very, same AS **self**
B 115

selven: self

sely: happy, harmless, weak, silly,
simple, kind, good AS **sælig**
"happy"

semblant: appearance OF.

seme inf. seem; cf. Icel **sæma**
"honor"

semelieste: handsomest

semely a. likely, comely

semely ad. properly, in a seemly
manner

semycope sb. short cape OF.

semyly: comely

semynge: appearance, seeming; to
my semynge] as it seems to me

Semyramus: Semiramis, queen of
Babylon, famous for wantonness
and imperial reign

sen inf. see; cf. **se**

senatour: senator OF.

sendal: cloth of silk for lining OF
cendal

sende inf. send; sent pt., pp.;
synde 3 pr. s. subj. AS **sendan**

sene inf. and pp. to see; cf. **se**

Senec: Seneca, Roman philosopher

senge inf. singe; seynd pp. AS
sengan

sent pt. s. sent; cf. **sende**

sentement: the feeling of love OF
sentiment

sentence: meaning, sense, order;
hy sentence] lofty sentiment OF.

seon inf. see; cf. **se**

Septe: Ceuta, in Morocco

Septemtrioun: North

septure: sceptre OF **sceptre**

septulture: sepulchre OF.

Serapioun: a mediæval physician,

probably of the twelfth century
A 432

sercele: circle, sphere OF **cercle**

serchen 3 pr. pl. search, haunt
OF **cerchier**

Sereis: Ceres, goddess of harvest

Sergeant of the Lawe: sergeant-at-
law, the highest rank at the
common-law bar

sermonyng: preaching

sermoun: discourse OF **sermon**

serpent: the hydra of Lerna B
3295 OF.

sertys: certes OF **certes**, pl. f.
of **cert**

servage: service, bondage OF.

servant, **servaunt**: servant, lover
OF.

serve inf. serve, help; **servede** 1
pt. s. OF **servir**

service: performance, concert Du
302 OF.

servitude: servitude OF.

servyn inf. serve

servysable: helpful

servyse: service OF **servise**

serwaunt: servant

serie: series, connected argument

serys: sirs OF **sire**

sese: seize; **sesed** pp. OF **seisir**

seson, **sesoun** sb. season OF
saison

sessionis sb. pl. meetings of the
Justices of the Peace OF **ses-**
sion Lat **sessio**

set 3 pr. s., pp. set; cf. **sette**

sete pt. sat; cf. **sitten**

sethe inf. seethe, boil AS **sēoðan**

sette inf., 3 pr. s., pp. set; **set**
3 pr. s., pp.; **set a cappe**] make
a fool of; **wel sette**] seemly,
suitable AS **settan**

seuretee: security, pledge OF
seurte

seven: seven; seven sterris] the
seven planets

seventhe: seventh

sewed 3 pt. s. followed OF **sivre**,
3 pr. s. **suit**

sewes: broths AS **sēaw** "juice"

sexteyn: sexton < sacristan

sey inf., 3 pr. pl., imp. tell; cf.
seye

seyde 3 pt. pl. said; cf. **seye**

seydyn 3 pt. pl. said; cf. seye
 seye pp., f. seen; cf. se
 seye, sey, seyn, seyne, sayn, sayne
 inf. say, tell; seith 3 pr. s.;
 seistow 2 pr. s.; sey 3 pr. pl.;
 seysthow 2 pr. s.; sayed, sayede
 pt. s.; seyde 3 pt. pl.; seydyn
 3 pt. pl.; sey imp.; sayede pp.
 AS secgan
 seye 1 pt. s. saw; cf. se
 seyen 3 pt. pl. saw; cf. se
 Seyes: Ceyx, husband of Alcyone,
 q. v.
 seyde 1 pt. s. saw; cf. se
 seyl sb. sail AS segl
 seyn inf. say; cf. seye
 seyn pp. seen; seyn biforn] fore-
 seen; cf. se
 seynd: singed, broiled; cf. senge
 seyne inf. say; cf. seye
 seyne pp. seen; cf. se
 seysthow 2 pr. s. sayest thou; cf.
 seye
 shadde 3 pt. s. poured AS scādan
 shadewe, shadwe sb. shadow,
 shade AS sceadu
 shadwed pp. shaded
 shaftes: spears, lances; shaft of
 arrow A 1362 AS sceaft
 shake pp. shaken AS scacan
 shal 1 pr. s. shall; schul, shalle,
 shalt, shul, shulle pr.; shuldest,
 shulde pt. AS sceal
 shalle 1 pr. s. shall; cf. shal
 shaltow 2 pr. s. shalt thou; cf.
 shal
 shame s. shame, modesty; doo
 shame] put to shame AS scamu
 f.
 shamefast: shamefaced, modest
 AS scamfæst
 shamefastnesse: bashfulness, mod-
 esty
 shamen inf. shame
 shameth 3 pr. s. thee shameth]
 thou art ashamed; cf. shamen
 shap sb. shape AS sceap Pf 373
 shape inf. refl. plan, prepare;
 shapen 2 pr. pl.; shoope pt. s.;
 shape, shapen pp. fated
 shaply a. fitted, "cut out"
 shappe 1 pr. s. devise, form
 sharpe a. sharp AS scearp
 sharpe ad. sharply

shave pp. shaved AS scafan
 shedde 3 pt. s. shed AS scādan
 sheef: sheaf AS scēaf
 sheeld: shield AS sciold m.
 sheeldes: crowns, coins worth
 3s. 4d. A 278
 sheene: bright, beautiful AS
 scēne
 shende inf. shame, ruin, corrupt,
 scold; shente 3 pt. s.; shent pp.
 AS scendan
 shene sb. shining AS scēne
 shene a. bright
 shene ad. brightly
 shent pp. corrupted A 2754;
 scolded B 1731; cf. shende
 shente 3 pt. s. put to shame; cf.
 shende
 sheo: she
 shepherd: shepherd AS scēap-
 hyrde
 shepne: sheep fold AS scypen
 shere sb. shears AS sceara
 shere inf. shear, cut AS sceran
 sherte: shirt AS scyrte
 shet pp. shut; cf. shetten
 shete: sheet AS scēte
 shetere a. shooter, used for bows
 shetten inf. shut; shette pt. pl.;
 shet, shette pp. AS scyttan
 shewe inf. show; sheweth 3 pr. s.;
 shewede 3 pt. s.; shewid pp.
 AS scēawian
 sheweth pr. s. sheweth . . . youre
 servaunt] your servant presents;
 cf. shewe
 shifte inf. distribute, ordain AS
 sciifan
 shilde 3 pr. s. prevent, shield AS
 scyldan
 shille: shrill AS scyl
 shipe sb. pay An 193 AS scipe
 shipe sb. ship An 194 AS scip n.
 shipnes: stables, sheds AS scypen
 shire sb. county; shires poss. A
 15 AS scīr f.
 shirreve: reve or governor of a
 shire; modern sheriff
 shiten pp. foul, defiled
 sho: shoe AS scō
 shode: temple of the head AS
 scēada
 shof 3 pt. s. shoved AS scūfan
 sholder-boon: shoulder blade

sholdred pp. shouldred
 sholdysthow 2 pr. s. shouldstest
 thou; cf. shal
 shon pt. s. shone; cf. shyne
 shonde sb. shame AS sceond
 shoo: shoe; shoon pl. AS scō
 shoop, shope pt. s. planned, disposed; cf. shape
 shorte a., pl. short; at shorte wordis] in short AS scort
 shorte inf. shorten AS sceortian
 shortly: quickly, briefly
 shot sb. arrow or crossbow bolt AS scot
 shoures: showers AS scūr
 shoutynge sb. shouting orig. unkn.
 showvyng sb. shoving
 shredde 3 pt. s. sliced AS scrēa-dian
 shrewe sb. shrew, cursed fellow
 shrewe 1 pr. s. curse, consign to the devil
 shrewed a. cursed
 shrewednesse: cursedness
 shrighthe 3 pt. s. shrieked
 shryfte: shrift, confession; as shryfte wythoute repentaunce] as one who confesses but does not repent AS scrift
 shrympes: shrimps, dwarfs; cf. AS scrimman "dry up"
 shryned pp. enshrined AS scrīn
 shul pr. pl. shall; cf. shal
 schulde pt. s. should; cf. shal
 schuldest 2 pt. s. should; cf. shal
 shuldres pl. shoulders AS sculdor
 shulle, shullen pr. shall; cf. shal
 shyne sb. shin AS scinu
 shyne inf. shine; shon pt. s. AS scīnan
 shyveren 3 pr. pl. 'shiver, go into fragments
 sich: such, that is what AS swylc
 sickness: sickness, disease
 Sidyngborne: Sittingbourne, forty miles from London, between Rochester and Canterbury
 sighte sb. sight AS ge-sihð f.
 signe sb. sign OF.
 significavit: a writ of excommunication beginning "significavit nobis venerabilis frater"
 sike a. sick AS sēoc

sike inf. sigh; siketh, sykyth 3 pr. s. AS sican
 siker a. certain, safe AS sicos
 siker ad. certainly
 sikerer: surer, more regular
 sikerly: certainly
 sikernes: safety, security
 siketh, sikith 3 pr. s. sighs; cf. sike
 sikirly: surely
 sikly ad. badly, with ill will
 siknesse: sickness
 Silla: for her lover Minos betrayed her father Nisus
 similitude: likeness, presentation, statement OF.
 simple a. unaffected OF.
 sinne sb. sin, evil AS synn f.
 sippe inf. sip, taste AS sypian
 Sir Gy: Sir Guy of Warwick, a Middle English metrical romance
 Sir Lybeux: Lybeaus Disconus, a Middle English metrical romance
 Sir Percyvell: Sir Percival
 sith ad. then C 869 AS siððan
 sith, sithe conj. since
 sithe sb. scythe AS siðe
 sithes pl. times; ofte sithes] oft-times AS sið
 sitten inf. sit; sitte pr. s.; sate, seet, sete pt. AS sittan
 sitthe: afterwards
 sittynge: most suitable
 sixte: sixth
 skalis: scales OF escale
 skapid pp. escaped OF eschaper
 skars: scarce OF escars
 skarsly: scarcely
 skarsytee: scarcity
 skile: cause, reason, profit; pl. fancies; cf. Icel skil
 skilful a. reasonable; skilful placis that bere charge] in important situations
 skillis: reasons; cf. skile
 skipte pt. s. jumped; cf. skype
 sklendre: slender, slight (?) Du slinder
 Skogon: Henry Scogan, tutor of the sons of Henry IV, and friend of Chaucer
 skorne 3 pt. s. scorned; ne skorne less] nor one that scorned less

skornere: scorner
 skorneth 3 pr. s. scorns OF
 escorner
 skornynge: mocking
 skriked pt. pl. shrieked; cf. Icel
 skrækja
 skylful: skilful
 skylfully: advantageously
 skyppe inf. skip; cf. Icel skopa
 slake inf. desist, cease, end AS
 slacian
 slakke a. slow AS slæc
 slaughtre: slaughter; cf. Icel slātr
 "slain flesh" AS slíht
 slawe pp. slain; cf. sle
 slayn pp. slain; cf. sle
 sle, slee inf., imp. slay; sleen 2
 pr. pl.; sleeth 3 pr. s.; slough,
 slowgh, slow pt. s.; slawe, slayn,
 sleyn pp. AS slēan
 sledere a. slippery AS slidor
 sleen 2 pr. pl. slay; cf. sle
 sleer: slayer
 sleeth 3 pr. s. slays; cf. sle
 sleighte sb. trickery, craft; cf.
 Icel slægð
 slen inf. slay; cf. sle
 slep sb. sleep AS slæp m.
 slepe inf. sleep; slepes 3 pr. s.;
 slepen 3 pr. pl.; sleep, slepe,
 slepte 3 pt. s.; sleptin 3 pt. pl.
 AS slāpan
 slepy: sleep-causing A 1387
 slepyng sb. sleep
 sleeves: sleeves AS slēf
 sleyn pp. slain; cf. sle
 slider: slippery AS slidor
 slight: cunning; cf. Icel slægð
 slit 3 pr. s. slideth; cf. slyde
 slitte inf. pierce, slit AS slitan
 slogardrie: sluggishness, laziness
 orig. uncert.
 slogardye: sloth
 slong pt. s. slung AS slingan
 slough 3 pt. s. slew; cf. sle
 slouth: sloth AS slāwð f.
 slow, slowgh pt. s. slew; cf. sle
 sluttish: slovenly
 slyde inf. slide, slip past; slit 3
 pr. s. AS slidan
 slye: clever, crafty, neat; cf. Icel
 slægr
 slyghte: sleight
 slyk: sleek orig. uncert.

smal ad. little AS smæl
 smale, smalle: slender, small
 smel sb. odor; cf. LGer smelen
 "smoke"
 smelle 1 pr. s. smell
 smellynge: smelling
 smert sb. smart, pain; cf. AS
 smeortan
 smerte a. sharp, painful
 smerte ad. sharply
 smerte inf., pt. s., impers. smart,
 pain, grieve
 smok: smock, dress AS smocc
 smokeles: without even a smock
 smoot 3 pt. s. struck; cf. smyte
 smothe a. smooth AS smōð
 smothe ad. smoothly A 676
 smylere: smiler, hypocrite; cf. Dan
 smile
 smylyng: sb. smiling
 smyte inf. smite; smyt pr. s.,
 imp.; smoot pt. s.; smyten pp.
 AS smitan
 smyth: blacksmith AS smið
 snewed 3 pt. s. snowed AS snāw
 snowte: nose; cf. Icel snýta
 snybben inf. rebuke; snybbed pp.;
 cf. Icel snubba
 so ad. so, so much AS swā
 so conj. so that
 so ferforthly: to the extent of
 sobre: sober, serious OF.
 sobrelly ad. sadly, seriously
 sobtil: crafty, searching OF sobtil
 sobyrlly: soberly
 soche: such
 socour sb. succor OF.
 Socrates: Athenian philosopher,
 famous for tranquillity under
 affliction
 sodeinly: suddenly OF sodain
 sodeynliche: suddenly
 soffren: suffer OF sofrir
 soft a. gentle AS sōfte
 soft ad. softly, timidly
 soghte 3 pt. s. subj. examined; cf.
 seken
 sojourne inf. tarry OF sojourner
 solaas, solas: comfort, amusement
 OF solas
 solempne a. solemn, festive OF.
 solempnely ad. in an important
 manner A 274
 solempnytee: ceremony

soleyn: alone, mateless OF solein
 solitarie: alone Lat solitarius
 som: some, a certain AS sum
 somdeel, somdel: somewhat, to
 some extent
 somer: summer; somerys poss.;
 someres game] (mid-) summer's
 play D 648 AS sumor
 som-kyn: some kind of
 somme: some
 somme: sum; sommes pl. sum of
 money OF somme
 somnour, somonour: a summoner,
 whose business was to summon
 delinquents to the ecclesiastical
 courts OF semoneor
 somtyme: once, formerly
 somewhat ad. somewhat
 sond: sand AS sand n.
 Sunday: Sunday
 sonde: message AS sand f.
 sondry a. sundry, various
 sone sb. son; sone of Eve] child
 of Eve AS sunu m.
 sone ad. soon, quickly AS sōna
 songe sb. song, poem AS song
 mn.
 songe 3 pt. s. sang; songen pt.
 pl.; cf. syngē
 sonken pp. sunken; AS sīcan
 sonne: sun AS sunne f.
 sonne-beem: sunbeam AS sunne-
 bēam
 sonnest: soonest
 soo: so; who soo] whoso, whoso-
 ever AS swā
 soold pp. sold AS sellan
 soond: sand AS sand n.
 soone: soon AS sōna
 soong 1 pt. s. sang; cf. syngē
 soor sb. sore AS sār n.
 soore a. sore AS sār
 soore ad. sorely AS sāre A 148
 soote a. sweet AS swēte
 sooth a. true AS sōð
 sooth play quad play: true jest is
 ill jest
 soothe: truth; soothe to seyn] to
 speak truthfully AS sōð n.
 soothfastnesse: truthfulness
 soothly: truly
 sope: sop, bread or cake soaked in
 a liquid < AS sūpan "to sup"
 soper: supper OF soper

sophistrye: sophistry OF sophis-
 terie
 sophyme: sophism, trick of logic
 OF soffime E 5
 sorcerie: sorcery OF.
 sorofull: sorrowful AS sorgful
 sorowe: sorrow AS sorg f. gen.
 sorge
 sorowfull: sorrowful
 sort: lot, fate OF.
 sorwe: sorrow AS sorg f.
 sorwen 3 pr. pl. sorrow AS sor-
 gian
 sorwful: sorrowful
 sorwyngē s. sorrowing
 sory: sorry; sory grace] misfortune
 AS sārīg
 soryest: sorriest or sorest
 soth, sothe sb. truth AS sōð
 sothe a. true
 sothefastnesse: truth
 sothely, sothly: certainly, truly
 sought pp. sought; cf. seken
 souked pp. sucked AS sūcan
 soukyngē: sucking, nursing
 soule: soul AS sāwol f.
 soun, soune sb. sound OF son
 sounde inf. heal AS sundian
 soupēn inf. sup OF soper
 souple a. soft, flexible OF.
 soure: sourly AS sūre
 sours: source, spring OF sourse
 E 49
 soutere: cobbler AS sūtere
 southe sb. truth; cf. soth
 southren: southron, from the south
 of England, as opposed to north
 England where alliterative poetry
 was most practiced
 Southwerk: Southwark, south of
 the Thames, across London
 Bridge
 sutil ad. subtly, finely OF.
 sutiltee: device OF.
 soutyle: subtle
 souvenaunce: remembrance OF.
 soveraynetee, sovereynetee: sover-
 eignty OF sovraintee
 sovereyn a. great, excellent, chief
 OF sovrain
 Sowdan: Sultan
 Sowdanesse: Sultana
 sowded to pp. confirmed in OF
 souder

sowe: sow; sowes poss. s. AS *sugu*
 sowed pp. *sewed* AS *siwian*
 sowen inf., pp. *sow* AS *sāwan*
 sowhte pt. pl. *sought*; cf. *seken*
 sowled pp. *given a soul to*
 sowne inf. *sound, play upon, be in*
harmony with, tend to; sowneth
3 pr. s. tends to B 3158;
sownynge p. OF soner
sownynge p. sounding Du 925;
in harmony with, conducing to
A 275
sowple: obedient OF *souple*
sowre: sorely
sowres sb. pl. sowres, bucks of
the fourth year OF *sor*
space: space, length of time; as
of so litel space] considering the
brevity of his service A 87;
course A 175 OF *espace*
spadde 1 pt. s. sped; cf. spede
Spaigne: Spain
spak 3 pt. s. spoke; cf. speke
spanne: span, measure of distance
AS spann
sparcle sb. spark < AS spearca
spare inf. refrain, cease, fail AS
sparian
sparhawk: sparrow-hawk AS *spear-*
hafoc
sparkes pl. sparks AS *spearca*
sparkles: sparks, live coals
sparklynge p. sparkling
sparre sb. beam orig. uncert.
sparth: battle-axe orig. uncert.
sparwe: sparrow AS *spearwa*
Spayne: Spain
spaynel: spaniel OF *espagnol*
speaken inf. speak; speake 3 pr.
s.; cf. speke
speces pl. species OF *especies*
speche: speech, conversation, voice
AS spæc f.
spectacle: eyeglass OF
spede inf., 3 pr. s. subj. succeed,
prosper; spadde, spedded 3 pt. s.;
sped pp.; sped, spedde imp. AS
spēdan
spedeful: profitable
speede imp. prosper; cf. spede
speeke 3 pr. subj. speak; cf. speke
speere: sphere; eighte speere]
eighth sphere, sphere of the fixed
stars OF *espere*

speke inf., 3 pr. s. speak; speeke
3 pr. s. subj.; spak 3 pt. s.;
spoken 3 pt. pl.; spoken pp. AS
specan
spekyng sb. speech
spelle: story, tale AS *spell n.*
spende inf. spend; spenden 1 pr.
pl.; spente 3 pt. s.; spent pp.
AS spendan
spere sb. spear AS *spere*
sperhawk: sparrow-hawk AS *spear-*
hafoc
speris: spheres OF *esperes*
sperme: seed OF *esperme*
spiced a. seasoned (by hypocrisy)
OF espicier
spicerye: spices OF *epicerie*
spille inf. spill, upset, destroy,
spoil; spille 3 pr. s. subj. may
die B 285; *spilt pp.* AS *spillan*
spirite: spirit; spiritis pl. OF es-
pirit
spitously: without pity OF *de-*
spitos
spitte 1 pr. s. spit AS *spittan*
spore sb. spur; paire of spores]
women then rode astride A 473
AS spura
spousaille: espousal, wedding OF
espousailles
spoused pp. espoused, wedded
spradde 3 pt. s. spread; cf. sprede
sprede inf. spread, open; spradde
3 pt. s.; sprad pp. AS *sprædan*
sprengen inf. sprinkle, scatter;
spreynd pp. AS *sprengan*
spreynd pp. sprinkled; cf. sprengen
sprong: 3 pt. s. sprang up; cf.
sprynge
spryng flood: spring tide, when the
sun and moon are in opposition
sprynge inf. spring, grow; sprong
3 pt. s.; spronge pp. AS *sprin-*
gan
spryngyng sb. source
spurne: kick AS *spurnan*
spynnyng: spinning; spynnyng
on feeld] she spun while keeping
the sheep AS *spinnan*
Squier: squire, one who attends
on a knight OF *escuier*
squiereth 3 pr. s. squires, escorts
squyrelis, sqwireles: squirrels OF
esquireul

staale 3 pt. s. stole upon; cf. stelen

staat: state, condition OF estat

stable sb. stable OF estable

stable a. permanent, constant

stabliſſed pp. established OF establir

Stace of Thebes: the "Thebaid" of Statius, in which these details are not given A 2294

staf: staff AS stæf

staf-slynge: a sling fastened to a stick to get greater power; cf. F eslingue

stal 3 pt. s. stole; cf. stelen C 610

stalke sb. stalk, stick; cf. the parable of the mote and the beam in Matt. vii. 3 A 3919; cf. AS stela "handle"

stalke inf. creep, move slowly AS stalcian

stalle sb. stall AS steall mn.

stampe pr. pl. pound AS stempan

stant 3 pr. s. stands; cf. stonde

stape pp. far gone, advanced AS steppan

starf 3 pt. s. died; cf. sterve

starke: strong, severe AS stearc

starlyng: starling AS stærline

startlyng: moving rapidly AS steartlian

stat: state, estate OF estat

statue: statue, portrait OF.

stature: height OF estatute

statut sb. statute; statutis pl. OF.

staves poss. pole's AS stæf

stede place; in stede] instead AS stede

stedefast, stedfaste: steadfast

stedfastnes: constancy

steedes: steeds AS stēda

steere: rudder, guide AS steora, steor

steerelees: rudderless

stekid pp. stuck AS stician

stel: steel AS stēl

stelen inf. steal; staale, stal 3 pt. s.; stole pp. AS stelan

stellefye inf. set among the stars

stemed 3 pt. pl. steamed AS stēman

stenten inf. stop, cease; stent pt. s., pp. AS styntan

stepe a. bright AS stēap

stere: rudder, guide AS stēor, stēora

sterlynges: coins sterling Ger sterline

sternely: sternly AS styrne

sterres pl. stars; sterres sevenel] this may mean the seven planets known to the ancients, or, as the planets have been mentioned, the seven stars in Ursa Major, or the Great Dipper; or possibly the seven stars of the Pleiades Du 823 AS steorra m.

sterry: starry

sterre sb. start; at a sterte] at one leap; cf. AS sturtan

sterre inf., pt. s. start, leap; stirte 3 pt. s.

sterve inf. die, perish; starf 3 pt. s. AS steorfan

stevan sb. sound; appointed time; at unset stevene] unexpectedly AS stefn

steyre: stair, degree AS stæger

stibourne: stubborn < AS styb "stub"

stid: stead AS stede

stidefast, stidfast: steadfast

stierne: stern AS styrne

stif a. strong, deep AS stif

stifly: unremittingly

stiketh 3 pr. s. sticks; stiked 3 pt. s. stuck; stiked pp. stabbed AS stician

stikke sb. stick, twig AS sticca

Stilbon: the planet Mercury (an error for Chilon, an ambassador, from Mercury's being messenger of the gods)

stile: style, manner of writing E 41, F 105 OF stile

stillatorie: still F distillatoire

stille: still, quiet AS.

stinte inf. stop, leave off; cf. stenten

stire inf. stir, incite AS styrian

stiropes: stirrups AS stigrāp "mounting-rope"

stirte 3 pt. s. started; cf. sterte

stod pt. s., stoden pt. pl. stood; cf. stonde Pf 98

stodye: industry in study; cf. OF *estudie*
stok: stock, race; **stokkes** pl. stumps AS *stocce*
stoke inf. stab Du *stoken*
stole pp. stolen; cf. *stelen*
stomblen 3 pr. pl. stumble
ston, stoon: stone AS *stān* m.
stonde inf. stand, be placed; **stant, stondeth** pr. s.; **stod, stood** pt. s.; **stoden** pt. pl.; **stonde** pp.; **stonden** at] agree to A 778 AS *standan*
stone: stone; pl. jewels Du 979
stongen pp. stung; cf. *stynge*
stoor: amount, store, stock; **telle** no *stoor*] take no stock in; no *stoor*] not at all OF *estor*
storial a. historical, storied
stot sb. a cob, strong horse
stounde: hour, time; that *harde stounde*] that cruel time AS *stund* f.
strake inf. move; cf. AS *strīcan* "go"
Stratford atte Bowe: a Benedictine nunnery at Stratford, London E. The French taught here would be Anglo-French, the business, legal, and court language of England. It differed from Paris French
straughte 3 pt. pl. stretched; cf. *strecche*
straunge: strange, foreign, distant; made it *straunge*] affected to stand aloof OF *estrange*
strawe pr. s. strew AS *strewian*
Strayte of Marrok: Straits of Morocco, Gibraltar
strecche inf. stretch; **straughte** 3 pt. pl. AS *streccan*
stree: straw AS *strēaw*
streem: stream AS *strēam*
streen sb. strain, progeny AS *strēon*
streght, streight a. straight AS *streht*
streight ad. straight
streit a. narrow, strict, little, close OF *estreit*
streite pp. drawn B 4547; cf. *strecche*
streite ad. tightly

streme: stream, current; ray, beam Pi 94, A 1495 AS *strēam*
strengis: strings, stringed instruments AS *steng*
stronger: stronger
strengthe: strength, might AS *strengðu* f.
strepe, streepe inf. strip; AS *strýpan*
strete: street, road AS *stræt* f.
streyne inf. constrain, urge OF *estraindre*
strif: strife OF *estrif*
strike sb. hank (of flax); cf. AS *strīcan*
strike pp. struck AS *strīcan*
strogelest 2 pr. s. strugglest orig. uncert.
strokis pl. strokes, blows orig. uncert.
stronde: strand, beach AS *strand*
stronge a., pl. strong AS *strong*
stronge ad. strongly
stroof 3 pt. s. contested, vied; cf. *stryve* OF *estriver*
strook sb. stroke AS *strācian*
stroong: strong AS *strong*
stroyere: destroyer OF *destruicor*
struglyng: struggling
stryve inf., imp. strive, vie; **stryven** 1 pr. pl.; **stroof** 3 pt. s. OF *estriver*
stubbel goos: the graylag goose
stubbes: stumps AS *stub*
studie sb. study; cf. OF *estudie*
studie inf., 2 pr. s. study, deliberate; **studieth** imp.
sturdely: sturdily, boldly OF *estourdi* "sturdy"
sturdiness: sternness
sturdy: stern, harsh
stuwe sb. fish pond in which fish were kept to ensure a supply of food; cf. OLG *stouwe*
style sb. mode of writing E 18 OF *style*
style sb. stile, used to cross a barrier F 106 AS *stigel*
style a. still AS *stille*
Stymphalides: a Greek maiden
stynge inf. sting, pierce; **stynge** 3 pr. s.; **stongen** pp. AS *stingan*
stynthe inf., 1 pr. s., 3 pr. s. subj.

stop; styntyn 3 pt. pl.; styntyng
p.; cf. stente AS styntan
styrte 3 pt. s. jumped; cf. sterte
styth sb. anvil AS stið
styward: steward AS stiweard
stywes: brothels OF estuve
subgetz: subjects OF souzgiet
subjeccioun: obedience, lover's ser-
vice OF subjection
submytted pp. agreed Lat sub-
mittere
substance: income, property OF
substance
subtil, subtil a. subtle, intricate
OF sobtil
subtilitee: craft
subtilly: cleverly, slyly
subtyl: finely woven
subtylytee sb. cunning
suburbes: suburbs OF suburbe
succede inf. succeed Lat suc-
cedere
successiouns: successions OF suc-
cession
successour: successor OF succes-
sour
sute: sweet AS swēte
suetnesse: sweetness AS swētness
suffice inf. suffice, be capable of
OF soufire, pr. p. soufisant
suffisance, suffisaunce: competence,
wealth
suffisant, suffisaunt: sufficient
suffisantly: sufficiently
suffise inf. suffice; imp. be con-
tent; cf. suffyse
suffrable: able to suffer, patient
OF soufrable
suffraunce: patience OF sufrance
suffraunt a. patient Du 1009
suffren inf. allow, suffer OF
sufir
suffysaunce: independence
suffyse inf. suffice OF soufire
suggestion: charge of crime OF
suggestion
sugre: sugar OF sucre
sum: some AS
sumdel: some part
sumtyme: once, formerly
sundry: sundry AS syndrig
sunne: sun AS sunne f.
sunnys: sun's
superfluitee: excess OF superfluite

supersticious: superstitious OF
superstitieux
supplicacioun: petition OF suppli-
cation
surcote: outer coat OF.
surement: security
suretee: feeling of security OF
seürte
surgerye: surgery OF surgerie
surmountide of pp. surpassed in
OF surmonter
surplys: surplice OF surpliz
Surrien: Syrian
Surrye: Syria
sursanure: a wound festering in-
ward, though outwardly healed
OF sorsaneüre
surte: security OF seürte
surveiaunce: surveillance OF.
Susanne: Susanna, accused of wan-
ton conduct by two elders of the
Jews in Babylon, was saved by
Daniel's cross-examination of her
traducers
suspecious: suspicious OF suspi-
cious
suspect sb. suspicion OF suspect
suspect a. suspected, suspicious,
ominous
susteene inf. sustain, maintain;
sustened pp. OF sustenir
suster, sustir: sister; sustren pl.
cf. Icel systir
sute: suite, single pattern OF
siute
suyte: material OF suite
swal 3 pt. s. swelled; cf. swelle
swalwe sb. swallow AS swealwe
Pf 353
swap imp. swipe, sweep, cut; cf.
swappe
swappe inf. strike off; swapte 3
pt. s. fell; swap imp. orig.
uncert.
swapte 3 pt. s. fell suddenly; cf.
swappe
swatte 3 pt. s. sweated; cf. sweete
swche: such; swche seven as in
the welkene sterris bee] the seven
stars (planets) which are in the
sky AS swylc
sweche: such
sweete inf. sweat; swatte 3 pt. s.
AS swātan

sweigh: sway, motion; cf. Icel sveigja
 swelle inf. swell; swal 3 pt. s. AS swellan
 swelt, swelte 3 pt. s. languished, perished orig. uncert.
 swelwe 3 pr. s. swallow AS swelgan
 swemyn 3 pr. pl. swim AS swimman
 swepe inf. sweep orig. uncert.; cf. AS swāpan
 swerd: sword AS sweord n.
 sweren inf. swear; swoor 3 pt. s.; swore, sworn 3 pt. pl.; swere imp.; swore, sworn pp. AS swerian
 sweryng sb. swearing
 swete sb. sweetheart AS swēte Du 831
 swet, swete a. sweet
 swetely: sweetly
 swetnesse, swettenesse: sweetness AS swētness
 Swetonius: Suetonius, Roman historian, wrote a history of the Cæsars
 swety: sweaty < AS swāt m.
 sweven: dream, vision AS swefen
 swich: such AS swylc
 swifte pl. swift AS swift
 swithe: quickly AS swiðe
 swogh sb. swoon < AS swōgan "sigh"
 swolwe inf. swallow AS swelgan
 swoolen pp. proud; cf. swell
 swoor 3 pt. s. swore; cf. sweren
 swoot sb. sweat AS swāt n.
 swore 3 pt. pl., pp. swore, sworn; cf. sweren
 sworn pp. cf. sweren; although he had it sworn] though he had done all to the contrary
 swough: a sigh, sighing of wind < AS swugian
 swooned pt. s. swooned; cf. swowne
 snow sb. whistling of wind; cf. AS swugian
 swowe sb. swoon
 swowne sb. swoon, fainting spell; a-swowne] in a swoon Du 123 AS swōgan

swowne inf. swoon; swooned 3 pt. s.; swowned pp.
 swownynge: fainting
 swyn: swine AS swin
 swynk sb. labor, toil AS swincan
 swynken inf. labor, toil
 swynker sb. toiler, worker
 swythe: quickly; fayre and swythe] good and quick AS swiðe
 syde sb. side; other syde] other hand P 102 AS side
 syen 3 pt. pl. saw; cf. se
 syghte dat. sb. sight AS gesiht
 sygne: sign, mark; wikked sygne] mark or trace of wickedness OF signe
 syk sb. sigh AS sican
 syk a. sick; for syk] for (being) sick AS sēoc
 syke a. used as sb. sick man Pf 104
 sykernesse sb. safety, security AS sicorness
 syklatoun: a costly cloth OF ciclaton
 sykys sb. sighs < AS sican
 sykyth 3 pr. s. sighs; cf. sike
 sylvyr: silver AS seolf
 symphonie: a kind of tabor, or drum OF.
 symple a. modest, innocent, unaffected OF simple
 symplesse: simplicity
 Symplicius Gallus: a Roman
 syn: since AS siððan
 synde 3 pr. s. subj. send; cf. sende
 syng inf. sing; soong, song, songe pt. s. songen pt. pl. songe pp. AS singan
 syngynge sb. singing
 synke inf. sink AS sinkan
 synne: sin AS synn f.
 Synoun: Sinon, a Greek spy, who delivered the wooden horse to the Trojans (poss. case)
 syre: sire, lord
 sys cynk: six-five, a (lucky) throw in dice OF six, cinq
 syth: time; sythis pl. AS sið
 sytte 3 pr. s. sits in, dwells in; imp.; cf. sitten
 syttyng p. sitting
 sywyng a. proportionate, suiting OF sivre

T

taak imp. take; cf. take

taas sb. heap, pile OF tas

Tabard: the Tabard Inn took its name from the tabard on its sign. The tabard was a sleeveless or short-sleeved coat worn by knights over their armor. The peasantry also wore a coat known as a tabard OF.

table sb. table; flat surface Dn 779; table dormant] a permanent table, in contrast to the "bord" which was laid across trestles A 353; tables pl. backgammon OF.

tabourryn 3 pr. pl. beat the tabor, drum OF taborer

tabyde inf. to abide

tacche sb. defect OF tache

tacord inf. to accord

taffata: thin silk, taffeta OF taffetas

taffraye inf. for to affraye, frighten
taille sb. tally; by taille] on credit OF.

take inf. take, seize, take place;
toke, tooke pt. s.; taken pt. pl.;
taak imp.; take pp.; take kepe]
take heed, observe AS (late)
tacan

takel: tackle, arrows; cf. Du takel

taken pp. received as obligatory D 77; cf. take

tale: account; telle no tale] say nothing AS talu f.

talen inf. tell tales

talighte: to alight, descend

talle: docile, serviceable, tall orig. uncert.

tamende inf. to amend

tanoyen: to annoy

Tantale: Tantalus, punished in Hades by being forced to stand up to the chin in water which receded from his lips as often as he attempted to quench his constant thirst; above his head hung fruits which always eluded his grasp

tapite inf. cover with tapestry (?) OF tapeter < tapet

tappe sb. tap OF tape

tappestere: barmaid AS tæppestre f.
tapycer sb. tapestry maker, upholsterer OF tapissier

tare: a weed OF tare

tareste inf. to arrest

target: target, kind of shield OF.

tarien inf. tarry, keep waiting;

tariet 3 pt. s.; tarie imp. AS tergan "provoke"

tarraye inf. to array

Tars: clooth of Tars] a kind of silk

tart: sharp AS teart

Tartarye: Tartary, probably referring to all except the western part of what we know as Russia

Tartre: tartar; oille of Tartre] cream of tartar

taryen inf. delay

tarynge sb. tarrying, delay

tassaille inf. assail

tassay inf. to assay, test

tassemble inf. to assemble

tassoille inf. to absolve

taughte 3 pt. s. taught, preached; cf. teche

Taur, Taurus: the Bull, a sign of the zodiac (reference to May 3)

taverne: tavern OF.

taverner: keeper of a tavern OF tavernier

tawht pp. taught; cf. teche

tayl: tail, stalk AS tagl

taylage: taxing by count OF tailage

teche inf. teach; taughte 3 pt. s. AS tæcean

techyng sb. teaching A 518

teene sorrow, grief AS tēona m.

teeres, teeris: tears AS tēar

tel, tellen inf. tell, relate; telles,

telleth pr. s.; tellen 3 pr. pl.;

tolde pr. s., pp.; toold pp. AS tellan

telles pr. s. tell; cf. tellen

tembrace inf. to embrace

temperance: moderation OF.

temperede 3 pt. s. tempered

tempest sb. storm OF tempeste

tempest imp. trouble, distress

temple: an inn of court; in London there were an Inner and Middle Temple, occupied chiefly

by barristers and law students
A 567 OF.
temporel: temporal OF.
tempre: temperate OF *tempré*
tempte inf. make trial of OF
 tempter
tenbrace inf. to embrace B 1891
tendirly: tenderly OF *tendre*
tendite inf. to endite
tendre a. tender; fastidious C
 517 OF.
tendrely: tenderly
tendure inf. to endure
tendyte inf. to endite, set down
 Pf 119
tene sb. vexation, sorrow AS
tēona m.
tene, a., pl. *ten* Dn 420 AS *tȳn*
tente sb. tent; *tentis* pl. OF
tente
tentifly: attentively OF *attentif*
tercelet: male falcon; *tercelettes*
 pl. OF.
terciane: a. *tertian* Lat *tertianus*
tere s. tear; *teris* pl. AS *tēar* m.
Termagaunt: one of the idols whom
 the Saracens were supposed to
 worship
terme: set time, space of time;
 a division of the signs of the
 zodiac in mediæval astrology
 F 1288; *terme* day] appointed
 day; in *terme*] in scientific ter-
 minology C 311; he had at
 command all the cases and the
 decisions which had been handed
 down since the time of William
 the Conqueror A 323 OF.
termyne inf. determine, set OF
 terminer
tersel: male eagle; cf. *tercelet*
terslet, *tercelet*: male hawk; *ters-*
letis pl.
Tertulan: Tertullian, church father,
 wrote treatises on chastity and
 modesty
tescape inf. to escape
teschape inf. to escape
tespye inf. to espy
testeres: head-pieces OF *testiere*
Teuta: a queen of the Illyrians
Tewnīs: Tunis; for the *towne* of
Tewnes] for all the wealth of
 Tunis

texpounden inf. to expound
text: quotation, proverb; **text**,
 printing on page; text and glose]
 both text and margin, i.e., both
 main panels and borders of the
 walls Du 333 OF *texte*
textueel: able to draw nice dis-
 tinctions in explaining terms
 OF.
teyd pp. tied AS *tigan*
thabsence: the absence
thalighte = *thee* alighte 3 pt. s.
 alighted upon
thamendys: the amends
than: then AS *þanne*
thank, *thanks* sb. his *thankes*] if
 he might have his way about it
 AS *þanc*
thanke 1 pr. s. AS *þancian*
thanne: then AS.
thapostel: the apostle (Paul, 1 Cor.
 vii.)
thar ad. there AS *þār*, *þær*
thar pr. s. *impers* needs AS
þearf
tharray: the array OF.
thassay: the assay
thassembled: the gathering
that rel. pron. what, that, which
 AS *þæt*
that conj. as much as B 1036
that conj. used expletively after
 rel. pron. or ad. conj.
thaughe: though AS *þeah*
thavys: the advice
thavysoun: the avisioun, the vision
 the pron. *thee*
the inf. prosper; cf. *thee*
Thebans a., pl. Polynices and
 Eteocles, sons of Œdipus, king
 of Thebes. Polynices, the
 younger, dissatisfied with his in-
 heritance, besieged the city with
 his friends, under his father-in-
 law, Adrastus, king of Argos.
 All, save the latter, were slain
 An 60
Thebes: ancient city in Greece
thee, *theen* inf. prosper AS *þēon*
theech, *thee* ich: may I prosper!
theef: thief AS *þeof* m.
theek for *thee* ik: may I thrive
 (northern form)
theen inf. thrive; cf. *thee*

thef, thefe: thief AS þeof
 thefeect, theffect: the effect, result
 thei pron. they
 thei conj. though AS þēh
 thegle: the eagle
 Thelophus: Telephus, wounded by
 spear of Achilles, and healed by
 its rust; a king of Mysia
 themperour: the emperor
 then conj. than AS þanne
 thencens: the incense
 thenchaumentz: the enchant-
 ments
 thencrees sb. the increase
 thendyting: the enditing
 thenken inf. think; thynke 1 pr.
 s.; thought 3 pt. s. AS þencan
 thenne: then AS þanne
 thennes: thence AS þanon
 thentente: the intent
 thenvyouse a. the envious
 Theodora: beloved of Algarsif
 theoff: thief AS þeof
 Theofraste: Theophrastus, Aureolus
 Liber de Nuptiis, a mediæval
 Latin tract against marriage
 ther, there: there, where AS þær
 ther as: where
 ther: their
 therabout: around it
 thereafter: thereafter, after that
 therbifoore, therbiforn: beforehand
 thereto: moreover, besides Du 678
 therfore: therefore
 therinne: therein
 therof: concerning that
 theron: thereupon
 theroute: out there, in the open
 therthe: the earth
 therto: thereto, to it, also, and in
 that
 therupon: immediately
 therwith: therewith, thereupon
 therwithal: thereupon
 theryn, therynne: therein, thereon
 thes: these
 theschewyng: the eschewing, avoid-
 ance
 Theseus: the great legendary hero
 of Attica. He freed the Attic
 roads from robbers; destroyed
 the Cretan minotaur with the
 aid of Ariadne, daughter of the
 Cretan king, whom he deserted

on the voyage home; helped Her-
 cules conquer the Amazons,
 whose queen, Antiope, here called
 Hippolyta, became his queen; he
 made Athens a city, and greatly
 improved its government
 Thesiphus: Sisyphus, punished in
 Hades by the never-ending task
 of rolling a huge stone up a hill,
 down which it would constantly
 roll again. S and C, C and T,
 T and Th were constantly inter-
 changed by scribes, hence the
 spelling
 Thessalie: Thessaly, in northern
 Greece
 thestaat: the estate, condition
 thevys poss. thief's
 thewed pp. mannered
 thewes: qualities of mind AS
 þēawas m.
 thexcellent a. the excelling
 thider: thither AS þider
 thiderward: thither
 thies: these
 thikke: thick, luxuriant; greves
 . . . thikke] groves abundant in
 AS picce
 thikke-herd: thick-haired
 thikkere: thicker
 thikkeste: thickest
 thilke: that very AS þylc
 thing: thing, property, good AS
 þing n.
 thinke inf., impers. seem; thought
 3 pt. s.; thoughte me] it seemed
 to me AS þencan
 thinne: thin AS þynne
 thirlethe 3 pr. s. pierceth; thirled
 pp. AS þyrlian
 this for thus Du 710
 this, thise pl. these Pf 540
 this for this is (often this is
 should be read as this, for the
 metre) F 889
 this al and som: this is the whole
 part, the sum total
 Thisbe: beloved of Pyramus in
 Nineveh
 tho pl. those AS þā
 tho ad. then AS þā
 tho conj. though; cf. Icel þō
 thoccident: the occident, the west
 thogh: though; cf. AS þēah

thought sb. thought AS þōht m.
 tholde: the old
 thombe sb. thumb; thombe of gold] probably the reference is to the skill his thumb has gained in judging corn and flour, with a satirical reference to the proverb, "An honest miller has a thumb of gold" (Sk.) AS þūma
 thonder sb. thunder AS þunor
 thunderdynt: thunderclap
 thonderynge: thundering AS þun-rian
 thonke 1 pr. s. thank; thonken pr. pl.; thonk imp. AS þonc
 thonour: the honor
 thoo: yet, still, then Icel þō
 thorgh: through; wher thorgh] by means of which AS þurh
 thorient: the orient, the east
 thorisonte: the horizon OF orizonte
 thorpis: villages AS þorp
 therw: through AS þurh
 thought pt. s. thought; cf. thenke thought 3 pt. s. impers. seemed; methought] it seemed to me; cf. thinke
 thour, thourw: through AS þurh
 thousande: thousand
 thousand: thousand AS þūsend
 thou pron. thou
 thow conj. though Icel þō AS þēah
 thral, thralle sb. slave, vassal AS þræl
 thral a. subject, debased
 thraste 3 pt. pl. pushed; cf. threste
 thre: three AS þrī, þrēo f.
 thre formes: Diana is called Luna in heaven; on earth, Diana and Lucina; and in hell, Proserpina
 thred, threed: cord, thread AS þræd m.
 thredbare a. threadbare
 thredde: third AS þrida
 thresshe inf. thresh AS þerscan
 thresshfold: threshold AS þerscwald
 threste inf. thrust, force his way; thraste 3 pt. pl.; cf. Icel þrysta
 thretyng: threatening AS þrēatian
 thridde: third AS þrida

thridde hevenes lord: Mars, the third sphere
 thrice: thrice
 thrifty: wise, excellent (in vague sense) Icel.
 thrilled pp. pierced; cf. thirrllethe
 thritty: thirty AS þrittig
 throgh: through AS þurh
 throng 3 pt. s. pressed AS þringan
 throope: thorp, village AS þorp
 thropes: villages
 throte: throat; throtys pl. AS þrote f.
 throwe sb. short period of time, moment AS þræg f.
 throwe inf. throw; throweth 3 pr. s. AS þrāwan
 thrustel: thrush AS þrostle
 thrustelcok: male thrush
 thryes: thrice AS þriwa + s ad. suff.
 thryve inf. prosper Icel þrifask
 thurgh prep. through, by means of AS þurh
 thurghfare: thoroughfare
 thurgh-girt pp. pierced through
 thurghout: throughout
 thirst sb. thirst AS þurst
 thirsted hym 3 pt. s. impers. he thirsted
 thurstil: thrush AS þrostle
 thymage: the image
 Thymalao: really Timoleon, son of Zenobia
 Thymothee: Timothy, St. Paul's friend and disciple
 Thymothee: Timotheus, a general of Antiochus
 thyn: thine
 thynke 1 pr. s. think; cf. thenken
 thynne a. thin AS þinne
 Tiburce: Valerian's brother
 tidyng: happening, news AS tidan
 tidyves: tidy, a small bird (wren or titmouse) F 648
 tikled pt. s. tickled
 til prep. to (before vowel) AS til
 til conj. until, till; til now late] until it became very late
 tiptoon pl. tiptoes AS tā
 tirannye: tyranny OF tirannie
 tiraunt: tyrant OF
 tithes pl. the tenth part of the

- produce or income of the people was payable for the support of the church and clergy, and was generally collected by the priest. Failure to pay could be punished by the lesser excommunication AS *tēoða*
- titleles:** usurping
- Titus:** Livius, Roman historian, tells the story of Lucrece
- to ad.** *too* AS *tō*
- to prep.** *to*, *for*, *as*; *hym to feete*] at his feet; *to creature*] as a living being
- to:** till C M 239
- tobreste** 3 pr. pl. break in pieces; **tobrosten** pp. AS *tōberstan*
- tobroke, tobroke:** pp. broken in pieces AS *tōbreacan*
- tobrosten** pp. broken in pieces; cf. *tobreste*
- to fore:** before
- tofor** prep. before
- toft** sb. tuft OF *touffe*
- togedere, togedres, togidre, togidres:** together AS *tōgædre*
- to-go** pp. fled AS *tō-gān*
- tohewen** 3 pr. pl. hew to pieces; **tohewe** pp. AS *tōhēawan*
- tok, toke** pt. s. took; cf. *take*; *it me tok*] I took it Du 48
- tokenynge** sb. sign AS *tācnian*
- tolde** pt. s., pp. told; *tolde of*] cared for, held in regard; cf. *tellen*
- tollen** inf. take toll; *tollen thryes*] take thrice the proper toll AS *toll*
- Tolletanes:** Toledo, in Spain, was selected by order of Alphonso X of Spain, as the place for which astronomical tables should be calculated
- tombe:** tomb OF *tombe*
- tombesteres:** female dancers < OF *tombeor*
- tomorn:** this morning
- to-morwe:** tomorrow
- tonge** sb. tongue AS *tunge*
- tonged** pp. tongued
- tonne:** tun, barrel of wine, ale AS *tunne*
- tonne-greet:** as great as a tun or barrel
- too** sb. toe; **toon** pl. AS *tā*
- too** a. two AS *twā* An 153
- too** ad. *to* Pf 150
- took, tooke** pt. s. took, betook; *tooke up*] attracted, held; cf. *take*
- toold** pp. told; cf. *tellen*
- toon** pl. toes; cf. *too*
- top** sb. crown AS *top*
- to-race** 3 pr. pl. tear in pieces OF *raser*
- torche:** torch OF.
- to-rente** 3 pt. s. tore asunder; **torent** pp. AS *tōrendan*
- tormentise:** manner of torment OF.
- tormentour:** tormenter OF.
- tormentrie:** torment OF *tormenterie*
- tormentynge:** torture
- torn** sb. turn OF *torn*
- tortuous:** indirect, oblique, not rising directly Lat *tortuosus*
- toshrede** 3 pr. pl. cut into shreds AS *scrēadian*
- toslyvered:** split into pieces
- totar** pt. s. tore in pieces; cf. *totere*
- totelere, totolour** sb. a. tattler, tattling orig. uncert.
- to-tere** inf. tear to pieces (Christ's body, by swearing by the various members, as wounds, nails, eyes, bones, etc.) C 474; **totar** 3 pt. s.; **totore** pp. AS *tōteran*
- tothyr:** the tothyr = that other
- to-tore** pp. torn apart; cf. *totere*
- touche** 1 pr. s. mention; *touchede* pt. s. OF *toucher*
- toumbe:** tomb OF *toumbe*
- toun, toune:** town AS *tūn* m.
- tour, toure:** tower OF A 1030
- touret:** turret OF *tourete*
- tourettes:** rings A 2152
- tourment** 3 pr. s. subj. torment OF *torment*
- tourne** inf. turn OF *torner*
- tourneyment:** tournament OF *torneicement*
- toverbyde:** to survive
- towaille:** towel OF *touaille*

towards: towards AS tōweard
 towchid: concerned OF touchier
 towgh: troublesome; make it
 towgh] be captious AS tōh
 towne: town AS tūn m.
 towonde 3 pt. s. broke in two
 AS wundian
 to-yeere: this year
 Trace: Thrace, in classic myth, the
 region north of Greece; later,
 what is now Eastern Rumelia
 trace inf. follow OF tracier
 trad pt. s. trod; cf. trede
 tragedie: tragedy, tragic history,
 story OF.
 traisoun: treason OF traïson
 traitour: traitor OF.
 traitourye: deceit OF traïtor
 Tramysene: Tremezen, Moorish
 kingdom in Africa
 transmutacioun: transmutation,
 change OF transmutation
 trappe sb. trap AS treppe
 trappures: trappings for horses
 orig. uncert.
 tras: procession OF trace
 traunce: trance OF transe
 travaille sb. struggle, labor, pains
 OF.
 travaillynge p. travailling, in tra-
 vail
 trays: traces OF trais
 trayteresse: traitress, deceiver
 traitresse
 traytore: traitor OF traitor
 tre: tree AS trēow n.
 trecherye: treachery OF trecherie
 trede 1 pr. pl. tread; trad pt. s.;
 troden pp. AS tredan
 tredefowel: cock
 tredyng: treading
 tree: wood; cf. tre
 tregetoures: jugglers OF tresge-
 teor
 trench: alley OF trenche
 tresons: treasons OF traïson
 tresoor, tresore sb. treasure OF
 trésor
 tresorere: treasurer OF tresorier
 tresoun: treason, betrayal OF
 traïson
 trespas sb. trespass, infidelity
 OF trespas

trespas inf. do wrong to, offend
 OF trespasser
 trespas sb. wrong, fault OF.
 tresse: tress; tresses, tressis pl. OF
 trece, tresse
 tretable: affable, docile, receptive
 OF traitable
 trete inf. narrate, discuss OF
 traïter
 trettee: negotiation, business, treaty
 OF traitié
 tretys sb. treaty, treatise AF
 tretiz
 tretys a. well-formed OF tretis
 trewe: true AS trēowe
 trewely, trewly: truly
 trewer: truer
 treweste: truest
 treye: trois, three OF trei
 triacle: sovereign medicine, heal-
 ing OF.
 tribulacioun: tribulation OF.
 tributarye: tributary, subject Lat
 tributarius
 trice inf. pull away; cf. Sw trissa
 trikled 3 pt. pl. trickled orig. un-
 cert.
 trille inf. turn; cf. Sw trilla
 trippe inf. dance, move lightly;
 cf. Sw trippa
 triste inf. 1 pr. s. trust; cf. Icel
 traust
 Tristram: Tristram, lover of Isolt,
 queen of Cornwall
 triumphe: triumph, triumphal pro-
 cession Lat triumphus
 troden pp. stepped; cf. trede
 trompe: trumpet, trumpeter;
 trompis poss. OF.
 tronchoun: broken staff of a spear
 OF tronchon
 throne: throne OF.
 Trophee: an error by Chaucer, who
 mistook the word "trophæa"
 (pillars) in the apocryphal Epis-
 tola Alexandri for the authority
 upon whose word Hercules' pil-
 lars in India and at Gades are
 believed to exist (Kittredge)
 troste inf. trust; cf. truste; cf.
 Icel treysta
 trotte imp. trot OF troter
 trouble a. muddled, stupid OF
 trouble

trouthe: truth Du 998 AS trēowð f.

trowe inf. believe, trust; trow pr. s.; trowen pr. pl.; trowed pt. pl., pp. AS trūwian

trowthe: truth AS trēowð f.

trowyn inf. believe (in); cf. trowe
Troye: the city of Troy, in Asia Minor, the scene of the ten years' fighting between the Greeks and Trojans for the possession of Helen, stolen from her husband Menelaus by Paris, son of King Priam of Troy

Troylus: Troilus, brother of Hector and Paris, lover of and deserted by Cressida

trussed pp. packed OF trousse

truste pr. s., pl., imp. trust; cf. Icel treysta

truste 1 pr. pl. trust A 501

trwe: true AS trēowe

trye a. choice OF trié

tryne: triune OF trine

Tuballe: Jubal, "father of all such as handle the harp and pipe," is here confused with his half-brother, Tubal-Cain, "the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron"; cf. Gen. iv. 21, 22. The discovery of music by hearing the sounds of the anvil is sometimes attributed to Pythagoras, q. v.

tukked pp. with his long coat tucked up in his girdle LGer tukken

Tullius Hostilius: Roman general, a shepherd in youth

Tullyus: Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman orator and patriot, model of rhetoric in the Middle Ages, author of "Somnium Scipionis"

tunge: tongue AS tunge f.

tunne: tun (met.) quality AS tunne

Turkeys a. Turkish

Turkye: Turkey

turneiynge: tourneying OF torneier

turnen inf. circle, turn; turne imp.; turned pp. OF torner

Turnus: a Latin king, overthrown by Æneas

turtill: turtle-dove AS turtle

turwis: sods, turf AS turf

twelf: twelve AS.

twelf-monthe sb. a twelve-month

twenty: score; a twenty winter] twenty winters AS twēntig

twey, tweye: two AS twā, f. twēgen

tweyfoold: folded over, double

tweyn, tweyne: twain, two AS twēgen f.

twies: twice AS twiwa

twiste sb. twist, twig AS twist

twiste inf., pt. s. wring, torment twyes: twice

twyned pp. twisted < AS twīn

twynkled 3 pt. s. twinkled AS twīnclian

twynklyng, twynkelyng: twinkling

twynne inf., pr. pl. separate, de-part; cf. AS getwinne "two and two"

tyde: tide, time AS tīd f.

tyden inf. betide

tydif: small bird; cf. tidyves

Tydius: one of the Seven against Thebes

tygre: tiger OF tigre

tykelnesse: danger, ticklish position

tyl: till

tyles pl. tiles AS tigele

tyme: time, season; tymys pl.; that tyme] at that time Du 794, 796 AS tima

tyne: barrel OF tine

typet sb. hood, used as a port-manteau by the friars who sometimes degenerated into peddlars AS tæppet

Tyro Appollonius: Apollonius of Tyre, hero of a classic romance, used in Shakespeare's Pericles

Tysbe: beloved by Pyramus; cf. Thisbe

Tytus Lyvyus: Titus Livius, generally called Livy, a Roman historian

U

unable: incapable OF able

unavysed: heedless OF avise

unbokelen inf. unbuckle, open;

unbokeled pp. OF boucler

unbounden pp. unbound, unmarried AS bindan
 unbrent pp. unburnt AS bernan
 unbuxumnesse: unsubmitiveness AS bûhsun
 unbynde inf. unbind AS bindan
 uncerteyn: uncertain OF certain
 uncommytted: not assigned, gratuitous
 unconstreyned pp. unconstrained OF constreindre
 uncoupylynge: uncoupling, releasing, letting loose OF couplen
 uncowple: uncouple, spring
 under-betten pp. kindled under AS bētan
 undergrowe pp. under normal size AS grōwan
 undermeles: afternoons AS undernmæl
 undernethe: beneath, under + AS beneoðan
 undernoom pt. s. received AS underniman
 underpighte pt. s. stuffed under < ME underpicchen
 understonde inf., imp., pp. understand AS understandan
 understondynge sb. understanding, mind
 undertake inf. affirm
 undigne: unworthy OF digne
 undo inf. reveal AS undōn
 undren: undern, mid-forenoon, 9 A. M., or the time up to noon AS undern
 undyr: under
 unfeestlich: unfestive
 unfeyned a. unfeigned
 ungrobbed: undelved
 unheele: sickness, misfortune AS unhælu f.
 unknowe pp. unknown
 unknownyge: ignorant
 unkorven: unpruned
 unkouth: uncouth AS uncūð
 unkynde: unnatural AS uncynde
 unkyndely: unnaturally
 unkyndenes: unkindness AS uncynde
 unlikely: unlikely
 unlyk: unlike E 156
 unmeete: unfit AS un-mæte

unneth, unnethe: scarcely AS unēaðe
 unnethes: scarcely
 unreprouable: not blameworthy
 unresonable: unreasonable
 unreste: restlessness
 unright: ill, harm AS unriht
 unsad: fickle AS unsæd
 unsely: deceitful AS unsælig
 unset: unappointed
 unsoghte a. unsought, not sought after
 unsowe pp. unsown
 unto: until; in addition to
 untrewē: untrue
 untrouthe: deceit AS untrēowþ f.
 untrussede: in disordered array
 unwar: unexpectedly AS unwær
 unweelde, unweeldy: unwieldy, weak
 unwemmed: unspotted AS unwemmed < wam "spot"
 unwist: unknown
 unwitte: folly AS with
 unwityng: without (her) knowledge F 936
 unwityngly: unawares
 unyolden: without having yielded
 up prep. upon, up
 up-so-down: upside down
 upbreyde 3 pt. s. upbraid AS up + bregdan "draw"
 upcaste pt. s. cast up
 uphaf 3 pt. s. uplifted AS up + hōf < hebban
 upon: against Du 1022; upon pain of A 1344
 up-on-lond: in the country
 uppe: up, left open
 uppyght pp. plucked up ME up + plicchen
 upright a. flat; upright, standing or sitting up Du 175 AS upriht
 uprist 3 pr. s. uprising
 upriste sb. uprising AS uprist
 upronne pp. ascended
 upsprynge inf. rise; upspring pt. s.
 upspring 3 pt. s. sprang up; cf. upsprynge
 upsterte 3 pt. s. started up
 upyaf 3 pt. s. gave up
 upyolden pp. yielded up

Urban: Pope at Rome, A. D. 222
 usage: custom OF.
 usance: custom OF.
 used pt. pl., pp. was accustomed
 to; cf. usen
 usen inf. accustom, use, enjoy;
 usyth 3 pr. s.; usyn 3 pr. pl.;
 usedest 2 pt. s.; used pt. pl., pp.
 OF user
 us selven: ourselves
 usshers: ushers OF uissier
 usure: usury OF.
 usurpe 1 pr. s. usurp, claim falsely
 OF usurper
 usyn 3 pr. pl. are accustomed; cf.
 usen
 usyth 3 pr. s. is accustomed; cf.
 usen

V

vacacioun: leisure OF vacation
 vache: beast, cow OF.
 valaunse: curtains of a bed; Venus
 valaunse] the borders of Taurus,
 the zodiacal sign called Venus'
 mansion; Mercury was thus near
 the end of Aries, which adjoins
 Taurus in the zodiac C M 145.
 Venus' bed is mentioned earlier,
 line 73
 valence: cloth of Valence, near
 Lyon (?), or of Valenciennes lace
 (Belgium) Pf 272
 Valentynys: Valentine's (Feb. 22)
 Valeria: constant widow of Servius
 Valerian: a Roman, converted by
 Cecilia
 Valerie: "Epistola Valerii ad Ruffi-
 num de non ducenda uxore," a
 mediæval Latin tract against
 marriage
 Valerius: V. Maximus, a Roman
 author B 3910
 Valerye: cf. Valerie
 valey: valley, vale OF valec
 vanysshe inf. vanish OF vanir
 vanysshyng sb. disappearance
 vanytee: vanity OF vanite
 variacioun: variation OF variation
 varyaunce: variation OF variance
 varyinge: variable, changeable, in-
 constant OF varier
 vassellage: prowess OF.
 vavasour sb. principal tenant of
 a great lord, therefore beneath a
 baron, who held land from the
 king. "The term applied to most
 middling land holders," (Tyr-
 whit) OF vavassor
 veluettes: velvets OF veluet
 venerie sb. hunting OF venerie
 Venerien: belonging to Venus
 venquysseth 3 pr. s. vanquishes;
 venquysshed pp. OF vainquir
 ventusynge sb. cupping (surgical
 operation) OF ventouser
 Venus poss. Pf 351
 venym: venom, poison, pus OF
 venim
 Venyse: Venice
 venysoun: venison OF veneison
 verdit: verdict OF veirdit
 vermyne: vermin OF vermine
 vernycle: a vernicle, a copy in
 miniature of the picture of Christ
 printed in blood upon the hand-
 kerchief or towel given by St.
 Veronica to Christ (on the way
 to Calvary) to wipe away the
 blood which flowed from the
 crown of thorns.
 verrailly: verily
 verray: very, true, truly OF
 vrai
 verrayment: verily
 verrelly: verily, truly
 vers pl. verses OF vers AS fers
 vertu: power, quickening force,
 virtue, ability; vertu expulsif]
 the power to expel what is harm-
 ful OF.
 vertuous a. able, efficient, virtuous
 OF vertuos
 vestimentz: vestments, garments
 OF vestement
 Vesulus: Monte Viso
 veyl sb. veil OF veile
 veyn a. foolish OF vain
 veyne sb. vein OF veine
 veyne-blood sb. blood-letting
 veze sb. blast < (?) AS fëšan
 "drive"
 Via Apia: the Appian Way, a fa-
 mous street running south from
 Rome
 viage: voyage, expedition OF.
 vicaire, vicary: vicar, deputy OF.

vice: defect OF.
 vicious: vicious OF vicious
 victorie: victory OF victorie
 vigilies sb. pl. meeting in the church yards upon festival evens. The women came in state, and those of the better sort had their mantles carried before them, partly for show, partly for comfort while seated at table OF.
 vileyns a. evil, wicked
 vileynye: abuse, ill manners, vulgar speech, disgrace OF vileinie
 Vincent: Bishop of Beauvais, tutor of Louis IX, wrote "Speculum Historiale"
 vinolent: filled with wine OF vinolentus
 virelayes: virelais, ballads with a return of rime OF virelai
 Virginia: daughter of Virginius
 Virginius: Roman "knight"
 virginitee: chastity OF virginite
 visitaciouns: visits OF visitation
 visite inf. visit OF.
 vitaille, vitaille sb. victuals, food OF.
 vitailed pp. provisioned
 vitremyte: woman's cap (?)
 Vitulon: Vitello, a Polish mathematician, c. 1254
 voide: empty, solitary OF.
 voidit: verdict OF.
 vois: voice OF vois
 volage a. giddy OF.
 vomyt: vomit OF.
 vouchensauf: vouchsafe (verbal endings attached to vouchen) D 52 OF vochier
 vouchesauf 2 pr. pl. grant, agree, vouchsafe (verbal endings attached to vouchen); voucheth-sauf imp.
 vowe: vow OF vou
 voyde a. free, void OF voide
 voyden inf. void, expel, depart; voyde imp.
 voys: voice OF vois
 Vulcanus: Vulcan, god of fire, and blacksmith of the gods, was the husband of Venus
 vyne: vine OF vigne
 vyrelayes: virelais, songs after a

French pattern, with return of rime OF virelais
 vyse: vice OF vice

W

waast: waist; cf. AS wæstm "growth"
 wade inf. go, descend AS wadan
 wafereres: candy sellers OF waufre
 wailen inf. wail, lament; waille pr. s.; waillynge p.; cf. Icel væla
 waiten inf. wait, expect, think OF waitier
 wake inf. remain awake, keep wake; wook 3 pt. s.; wakyd pp. AS wacian
 wakepleyes: funeral games
 wakyd pp. kept wake, caroused; cf. wake
 wakyng: time of being awake
 waky: watchful AS wacor
 wal: wall AS weall
 Walakye: Wallachia, a principality, now a part of Rumania
 walet: wallet orig. uncert.
 walked for a-walking: AS wealcā
 walle: wall; wallys pl.
 wallid pp. walled
 walwe 1 pr. s. wallow; walweth 3 pr. s.; walwed pp. AS weal-wian
 Walys: Wales
 wan: pale AS wann
 wandrynge sb. traveling AS wandrian
 wang-tooth: cheek-tooth, molar AS wangtōð
 wanhope sb. despair AS wan + hōpa
 wanne pt. s. won; cf. wynne
 wante inf. want, lack, be absent Icel vanta
 wantowne a. wanton, wild AS wan + togen
 wantownesse: wantonness, extravagant mannerism
 wantrust: suspicion
 wantynge of blyndnesse: cæcitate carens, by principle of opposites, an etymology of Cecilia
 wanye inf. wane AS wanian

war a. wary, cautious, aware AS
wær
war 3 pr. s., 2 imp. refl. look out,
make way AS warian
warde: keeping, custody AS weard
wardecors: body guard OF war-
decors
wardeyns: guardians OF wardein
Ware: town in Hertfordshire
ware sb. goods, wares AS waru
ware a. aware AS wær
ware imp. refl. beware AS warian
warente: protect OF warantir
warice: protect, cure OF warir
warie 1 pr. s. curse AS wergian
warished pp. cured
warme: warm AS wearm
warne inf. refuse, warn; warnede
pp. AS warnian
warreyist 2 pr. s. makest war
upon OF werreier
waspes poss. pl. wasps' AS wæps
wasshe pp. washed AS wæscan
wast sb. waste OF
wastel-breed sb. bread made from
the finest flour OF wastel
"cake"
water: by water he sente hem
hoom] he made them walk the
plank, to swim home AS wæter
waterlees a. out of water
waterying: watering place; this
was at the second milestone on
the road to the shrine of St.
Thomas à Becket
Watte: Wat or Walter
watyr: water
wawe: wave orig. uncert.
waxe inf. grow; wax 3 pt. s.;
waxen pp.; cf. wexen AS
weaxan
wayk: weak Icel veikr
wayle: wail; cf. Icel væla
waylyng sb. wailing
waymentynge: weeping, lamenta-
tion OF waimeter
wayten inf. watch, observe, care
for; wayted pt. OF waitier
webbe sb. weaver AS webba
wedde sb. to wedde] as a pledge
AS wedd
wedden inf. wed; weddede 3 pt. s.
AS weddian
weddyng: wedding AS wedding

wede sb. clothing AS wēod
weder: weather AS weder
wedercock: weather-cock
wedewehed: widowhood
wedewys pl. widows
wedlok: wedlock AS wedlāc
wedres: storms
weede: clothing
weel ad. well AS wel
weelde, weelled 3 pt. s. control,
manage; cf. welde
weex 3 pt. s. waxed; cf. wexe
weilawey interj. alas!
weked: wicked AS wican "yield"
wel a. fortunate, contented; wel
was hym] he rejoiced
wel ad. more; wel ofter] more
often
welawaye interj. alas!
wel-bigoon: pleased, fortunate
welde: weld, a plant used in dye-
ing AS weald
welde inf. wield, keep control of;
weelde, weelled, welte 3 pt. s.
AS wieldan
wele sb. weal, welfare, good for-
tune AS wela
wele ad. well
wele 1 pr. s. will; cf. wille
welfarynge: thriving, prosperous
welful: beneficent
welk 1 pt. s. walked
welked pp. dried up Du welken
welkene, welkne: the heavens, the
sky AS wolcen
welle sb. well, spring, source;
welle-stremes well-springs AS
wella
welnyeghe: welnigh
welte 3 pt. s. wielded; cf. welde
wem: harm, blemish AS wam
wemen pl. women AS wifman
wemmeles: stainless
wenche: girl, wanton AS wancol
"unstable"
wend pp. supposed; cf. wenen
wende 1 pt. s. weened, supposed;
cf. wenen
wenden inf. travel; wende pr.;
went pt., pp. AS wendan
wenen inf., 3 pr. pl. ween, sup-
pose, imagine; wenestow, wenyst
2 pr. s.; wende pt. s.; wenden

pt. pl.; wene 3 pr. s. subj.; wend
 pp. AS wēnan
 wenestow 2 pr. s. weenest thou;
 cf. wenen
 wengis: pl. wings Icel vāngr
 went sb. path Du 398 AS wend
 wente 3 pt. pl. went; cf. wenden
 wenyst 2 pr. s. suppose, imagine;
 cf. wenen
 weopeth 3 pr. s. weeps; cf. wepe
 An 169
 wepe inf. weep; weopeth, wepyth
 pr. s.; weep 3 pt. s. AS wēpan
 wepene, wepne: weapon AS wāpen
 wepynge sb. weeping
 wepyth 3 pr. s. weeps; cf. wepe
 werche, wirche inf. work, perform;
 worcheth 3 pr. s.; wrought pt. s.;
 wrought, wrought pp. AS wyrcean
 were sb. weir, fish-trap AS wer
 were sb. doubt; cf. OLG were
 "disorder"
 were inf. wear; werestow 2 pr. s.;
 wered 3 pt. s. AS werian
 were inf. defend A 2550 AS
 werian
 were pr. s. subj. must have been
 werestow 2 pr. s. do you wear;
 cf. were
 werk sb. work; werkes pl. deeds,
 works, paintings AS worc
 werken inf. work, act; werketh
 imp. pl. dispose of AS wircan
 werkyng: behavior, action, works
 worm: worm AS wȳrm
 worm foul: worm-eating birds
 werne inf. refuse permission to
 AS warnian
 werne 3 pt. pl. were
 werre sb. war, service AS werre
 werre ad. worse AS wiers
 werreyen inf. war against, make
 war; werreyed pp. OF werreier
 wers, werse: worse AS wyrsa
 werte sb. wart AS wearte
 wery: weary AS wērig
 wessh, wesshe 3 pt. s. washed;
 cf. wasshe
 weste sb. west; by weste] west-
 ward AS west
 weste inf. go westward Pf 266
 weste ad. west

Westlumbardye: West Lombardy
 wete a. wet AS wāta
 wete inf. wit, know AS wātan
 wette 3 pt. s. wet
 wex sb. wax AS weax
 wexe inf. grow, become; weex,
 wex, wexe pt. s.; wexen pt. pl.;
 wexynge p. AS weaxan
 wexynge p. waxing, growing; cf.
 wexe
 wey: way, path; do wey] lay aside;
 wey ner went] highroad nor foot-
 path; by al weyes] in all things
 AS weg
 wey to blynde: cæcis via, an ety-
 mology of Cecilia
 weyen inf. weigh; weyest, weyeth
 pr. s.; weyeden pt. pl. AS wegan
 weyke: weak; cf. Icel veikr
 weylaway interj. alas!; so wey-
 lawey] alas!
 weyve inf. turn aside, abandon,
 give up AF weyver
 wham: whom
 whan: when AS hwanne
 what: whatever AS hwæt
 what! interj. what! how! why!
 wheel: wheel (of Fortune) A 925;
 cf. whele AS hwēol
 wheither: whether, which of two
 AS hwæðer
 whele s. wheel; the everturning
 wheel was the symbol of the
 goddess Fortune Du 643 AS
 hwēol
 whelkes pl. pimples AS hwylca
 whelp: whelp, puppy AS hwelp
 whenne, whennes: whence AS
 hwanne
 wher: whether
 wheras: where that, where
 wherfore: why; for any cause C
 216
 wherinne ad. in which
 wher-so: wheresoever, whitherso-
 ever
 wher-thorgh: by means of which
 wherto: why, for what purpose
 Du 669
 wherwith: by means of which
 whete: wheat AS hwæte m.
 whether, whethir: whether
 whette: whet, sharpened AS
 hwettan

which for who Du 96 AS hwilc
 which: what, what sort of, such;
 which a] how great a, what a
 whider: whither AS hwider
 while sb. AS hwil f.
 while: as long as
 whiles: while; the whites] while
 Du 151
 whilhom, whilom: upon a time,
 once AS hwilum
 whippe: whip; whippis pl. orig.
 uncert.
 whippeltre: cornel-tree, or dogwood
 whirle inf. whirl; cf. Icel hvirfla
 whistelynge sb. a whistling sound
 AS hwistlung
 whistlynge p. whistling
 whit a. white AS hwit
 White: a translation of the name
 Blanche. Blanche was the wife
 of John of Gaunt, Earl of Lan-
 caster. She died Sept. 12, 1369,
 at the age of 29. John of Gaunt
 is the "man in black," who
 mourns for her Du 947
 whitenesse: whiteness
 whoe, whoo: who; whoo is] who
 is it that Du 181 AS hwā
 whos: whose Pf 419
 whyne inf. winny AS hwīnan
 whyte lylle: the white lily was the
 token of the perpetual virginity
 of Mary B 1651
 wight sb. person, man AS wiht f.
 wight a. active; cf. Icel vigr
 wighte sb. weight AS wiht
 wiht: person; cf. wight
 wikke a. wicked, unhappy, hard,
 grievous; cf. AS wican
 wikked a. wicked, evil; wikked
 nest] Oliver le Mauny (Malni)
 of Brittany, said to have be-
 trayed, with du Guesclin, Pedro
 of Spain
 wikkedly: evilly
 wikkednesse: evil
 wil sb. will, desire AS willa
 wil 3 pr. s. wills, desires; cf. wille
 wilde: wild; wilde fyr] Greek fire,
 difficult to extinguish AS wilde
 wildely: wildly
 wile: skill AS wil f.
 wilful ad. wilfully
 wilfulhed: presumption

wilfulness: wilfulness
 wilkyn: diminutive of will
 will, wille sb. desire, willingness;
 good will] good will, free con-
 sent Du 116 AS will
 wille inf. desire, wish, will; wele
 1 pr. s.; wil 3 pr. s.; wile 2 pr.
 s.; woldest, wolt 2 pr. s.; wole
 3 pr. s.; wold, wolde pt. s., pl.,
 subj.; wolden pt. pl.; wolde pp.
 AS willian
 willynge sb. will, desire
 wilnen inf. desire; wilnest 2 pr.
 s.; wilned pt. s.; cf. wille sb.
 AS wilnian
 wile 2 pr. s. wilt; cf. wille
 wimpul: wimple, the headdress of
 a nun, covering head and neck
 AS wimpel
 wintres poss. winter's AS winter
 wirche inf. work, assist AS
 wyrcean
 wirkyng sb. actions
 wis a. wise AS wis
 wis ad. certain; as wis] as certain
 (it is) F 1470
 wis 1 pr. s. know (used in ex-
 pression "I wis, ywis") iwis,
 ywis = AS gewiss "certainly
 wisdom: wisdom AS wisdōm m.
 wise sb. manner, fashion AS wise
 f.
 wiseste: wisest
 wisly: truly
 wisse inf. instruct, tell; wysse 2
 pr. subj. AS wissian
 wissely: wisely, certainly
 wisse 1 pr. s. wish AS wýscan
 wist pp. known; wiste 3 pr. pt. s.
 know, knew how; wistest 2 pr. s.
 thou knowest; cf. witen
 wit sb. wit, sense, reason, judg-
 ment AS witt
 wite inf. blame; cf. wyte
 witen inf. to know, to wit; wiste,
 woost, woot, woste, wot, wote
 pr.; wiste pt. s.; wist pp. AS
 witan
 with: with meschance] misfortune
 upon (her)!; with sorwe] sorrow
 on you! AS wið
 withalle: withal, moreover
 withdrawe inf. draw back, refuse,
 withdraw AS wið + dragan

withholde, witholde pp. engaged, employed by; retained A 511 AS healdan
 withinne: within AS wiðinnan
 withoute, withouten: without, besides AS wiðutan
 withseye, withseyn inf. withsay, oppose, renounce AS wiðsecgan
 withstonde inf. oppose AS wiðstandan
 withynne: within
 wittesse imp. bear witness AS sb. witness
 witte sb. wit
 wityng: knowing, knowledge
 wlatsum: loathsome AS wlætta "loathing"
 wo sb. woe, sorrow, grief AS wā
 wo-bigon: woe-begone AS wā + bigān
 wod: wood, a plant used in dyeing blue Fa 17 AS wād
 wode sb. wood AS wudu m.
 wode a. mad; cf. wood AS wōd
 wodebynde: woodbine AS wudu-bindæ
 wodedowve: wood-pigeon
 wofuller: more woeful
 wol ad. well, full Pf 644
 wold, wolde, wolden pt. s., pl. would; cf. wille
 wolde pp. desired; cf. wille
 woldest 2 pr. s. wouldst; cf. wille
 wole 3 pr. s. will; cf. wille
 wolle sb. wool AS wulle f.
 wolt, wolthow, woltow 2 pr. s. wilt; cf. wille
 womanly ad. in a womanly manner
 wombe: the belly, womb AS wamb f.
 womman: woman; wommen pl. women AS wifmann
 wommanhede: womanhood
 wonder sb. marvel, wonder, anxiety AS wundor
 wonder a. wondrous
 wonder ad. wondrously
 wonderly ad. wonderfully
 wondeth 3 pr. s. wounds; cf. wounde
 wondre inf. wonder; wondred, wondreden pt. pl.; wondred pp. AS wundrian

wondres pl. wonders
 wondrynge: wondering
 wondyr ad. very (with vague intensive force)
 wondyrful: wonderful
 wone sb. custom, wont AS gewuna m.
 wone, wonen inf. dwell, be accustomed; woned pt. s.; wonynde p.; wonyd, woned, wont pp. AS wunian
 woneden 3 pt. pl. dwelt; cf. wone
 wonger sb. pillow AS wongere
 wonne, wonnen pp. captured, conquered AS winnan
 wont pp. accustomed; cf. wone
 wonyd pp. accustomed, wont; cf. wone
 wonyng sb. dwelling
 wonyng p. dwelling; cf. wone
 woo sb. sorrow; me is woo] I am sorry AS wā
 woo a. woeful, sad
 wōod, woode a. mad, insane AS wōd
 woode sb. wood AS wudu m.
 woodecraft: woodcraft
 woodeth pr. s. goes mad; cf. wood
 woody: madly, insanely
 woodnesse: madness
 wook 3 pt. s. woke; cf. wake
 woon sb. retreat, resource
 woost 2 pr. s. know; cf. witen
 woot pr. s., pl. know; cf. witen
 wopen pp. of wepe
 worcher: deviser < AS wyrcean
 worcheth 3 pr. s. worketh; cf. werche
 word, worde: word, saying, proverb AS word n.
 word and ende for ord and ende: beginning and end
 worldes, worldis, worldys poss. world's AS weoruld f.
 worly for worthy: worthily
 worm: snake, serpent AS wyrn m.
 wormes: worms, corresponding to the wormwood in the mediæval pharmacopœia B 4152
 wors: worse AS wyrn
 worshiþe inf. reverence < AS weorðscipe m.
 worshippe s. worship, honor, re-

noun; seyn worshyppe] speak
praise AS weorðscipu m.
worste: worst
worstede sb. worsted < Worth-
stead, town in Norfolk
wortes: herbs AS wyrt f.
worthe inf. go, become; worth
upon] got upon AS weorðan
worthe, worthi a. worth, worthy,
profitable AS weorð
worthyeste: worthiest
worthynesse: worth
woste 2 pr. s. know, realize; cf.
witen
wot, wote pr. s. know; cf. witen
wounde inf. wound; wondeth pr.
s.; wounded, wounded pp. AS
wundian
wounde sb. wound; woundes pl.
plagues; the X woundes of
Egiptel the ten plagues sent
upon the Egyptians because
Pharaoh would not set free the
Children of Israel; cf. Exodus
vii.-xii. Du 1206 AS wund f.
wounder: wondrous; cf. wonder
woundis poss. pl. wounds'
woweth: woeth AS wōgean
wowke: week AS weocu f.
wounded pp. wounded; cf. wounde
woxen pp. become, grown AS
weaxan
wrak: wreckage AS wræc n.
wrappe inf. cover, wrap orig. un-
cert.
wrastelyng: wrestling-match AS
wrastlian
wrastlen inf. wrestle
wrastling sb. wrestling
wrathe sb. anger AS wræððo f.
wrathed pp. made angry
wraw: full of wrath orig. uncert.
wrecche, wrech sb. wretched
creature; Y wrechch] unhappy
creature that I am AS wrecca
m.
wrecche a. wretched, woful
wrecchedly: miserably
wrecched pp. wretched AS wrecc
wrecchednesse, wretchednesse: low
degree, misery
wreche sb. revenge AS wracu f.
wreched engendrynge of Man-
kynde: "De Miseria Conditionis

Humanæ," a Latin prose work
by Pope Innocent III, translated
by Chaucer. Fragments are ap-
parently preserved in Man of
Law's Tale (Sk.) L 414
wreke inf. wreak vengeance; wreck
imp.; wreke pp. AS wrecan
wrekere: avenger
wrete pp. written; cf. write
wrethe: wreath AS wræð
wreye inf. disclose AS wrēgan
wrie inf. disclose, reveal AS
wrēgan
wrien inf. turn aside AS wrigian
wrighte sb. mechanic, carpenter;
wrightes poss. AS wyrhta m.
write inf. write; writ 3 pr. s.;
wroot, wrote pt. s.; wrete, write,
written, writen, writyn pp. AS
writan
write, writen pp. written; cf.
write
wrihyng sb. turning AS wrīðan
writte sb. writ AS writ n.
written pp. written; cf. write
writyn pp. written; cf. write
wrytyng sb. writing AS writing
wroght pp. made, created; cf.
werche
wroghte 3 pt. s. practiced; first
he practiced, then he preached
A 497; cf. werche
wrong 3 pt. s. wrung; cf. wrynge
wronge sb. wrong AS wrang
wronge ad. wrongly Du 950
wroot 3 pt. s. wrote; cf. write
wrooth, wroothe, wrothe a. angry;
be wroothe] are enemies AS
wrāð
wrought pp. made, done; born
Du 90; cf. werche
wrye inf. hide AS wrēon
wryen inf. turn aside AS wrigian
wryng, wrynge inf. wring, wring
the hands; wrong pt. s. AS
wringan
wyd, wyde a. broad, wide, roomy,
open AS wīd
wyde ad. widely E 722 AS wīde
wydewhere: far and wide
wydwe sb. widow AS widuwe
wyf, wyfe: wife, woman AS wīf n.
wyfhed: wifehood
wyflees: wifeless

wyfly: wifely, womanly
 wyght: weight AS wiht
 wyghte: wight, person; wyghtys pl.
 AS wiht
 wyke: week AS weocu f.
 wyl sb. will, desire AS willa, will
 wyldernes: wilderness
 wyldnesse: wilderness
 wyle sb. wile, deceit AS wil f.
 wylugh: willow AS welig
 wymen: women
 wyn: wine; wyn ape] ape's wine;
 wine made men lambs, apes, lions
 or swine, according to their tem-
 peraments H 44 AS win n.
 wynd sb. wind AS wind m.
 windas: windlass; cf. Icel vindās
 "wind-pole"
 wynde inf. swathe, wind about,
 turn about; wynt 3 pr. s. AS
 windan
 Wyndisore: Windsor, the king's
 palace Sc 43 marg.
 wyndowe: window; cf. Icel vind-
 auga "wind-eye"
 wynged pp. winged
 wynges: wings; cf. Dan vinge
 wynke: sleep, shut the eyes AS
 wincian
 wygne inf., pr. s. gain, get ahead
 of, win, conquer; wanne pt. s.;
 wonne, wonnen pp. AS winnan
 wyunnyng sb. profit
 wynt 3 pr. s. windeth; cf. wynde
 wynter: winter AS winter
 wyped 3 pt. s. wiped AS wipian
 wys a. wise, sensible; to make it
 wys] make it a matter for delib-
 eration AS wīs
 wys ad. certainly ? < gewiss
 wyse sb. wise, manner AS wise
 wyse pl. as sb. wise men
 wysse a. wise AS wissian
 wysse 2 pr. subj. guide, lead; cf.
 wisse
 wysse sb. wish < AS wīscan
 wyte sb. reproach AS wite n.
 wyte inf., imp. blame, reproach
 AS wītan
 wythoute ad. without, outside AS
 wiðūtan
 wytte: wit, wisdom, ability, mind
 AS witt n.

wytyn inf. know; cf. witen
 wyve inf. wive, take a wife AS
 wīfan
 wyves pl. wives

X

Xantippa: Xantippe, wife of Soc-
 rates

Y

Y: used for pers. pron. I
 ya: yes, yea AS gēa
 yaf pt. s. gave; cf. yeven
 yate: gate AS geat n.
 ybe pp. been
 ybeen pp. been
 ybet, ybete pp. beaten, forged;
 hammered into a thin foil A 979
 AS bēatan
 yblent pp. blinded, deceived
 ybore, yboren, yborn pp. born,
 borne
 ybounde, ybounden pp. bound
 ybrend, ybrent pp. burned
 ybrought pp. brought
 yburied pp. buried
 ycalled pp. called
 ycaried:
 ycheyned pp. chained
 yclad pp. clad
 yclenched pp. clinched
 ycleped pp. called
 yclothed pp. clothed
 ycome, ycomen pp. come, de-
 scended
 ycorowned pp. crowned
 ycorve, ycorven pp. cut A 2013
 ycoupled pp. coupled, wedded
 ycoyned: coined
 ycrammed: crammed
 ycrased pp. cracked, broken
 ycristned pp. christened
 ycrownd pp. crowned
 ydel: idle, vain AS īdel
 ydelly: vainly, to no profit
 ydelnesse: idleness
 ydiot: idiot OF idiot
 ydolastre: idolater OF idolastre
 ydole: idol OF idole
 ydon, ydoo pp. done, finished
 ydrawe pp. drawn, dragged, stolen
 ydressed pp. arranged

ydressed pp. dressed, arranged
 ydropped pp. sprinkled
 ydryven pp. driven
 ye sb. eye AS ēage n. Du 807
 ye pron., pl. used as s. Du 1129
 ye ad. yea; yea or nay] affirmative
 or negative AS gēa
 yeddynges sb. pl. minstrel songs,
 ballads AS yeddung
 yee: yea, verily
 yeer sb. s., pl. year; yeere pl. AS
 gēar n.
 yeldehalle sb. guild-hall; cf. Icel
 gildi
 yelden inf. yield AS gieldan
 yeldyng sb. yield
 yelewe: yellow AS geolu
 yelow: yellow
 yelownesse: yellowness
 yelpe inf. boast AS gielpan
 yelwe: yellow
 yeman: yeoman, an attendant from
 the peasant class, above the com-
 mon servant orig. uncert.
 yemanly: in a yeoman-like manner
 yen: eyes; cf. ye
 yer: year; pl.; cf. yeer
 yerde: stick, rod, rule; slepy yerde]
 the caduceus of Mercury, the
 winged and serpent-entwined rod
 with which he conducted the
 souls of the departed to the lower
 world AS gierd f.
 yerde: yard, garden AS geard m.
 yere: year; yeris pl.; cf. yeer
 yerne ad. eagerly, gladly AS
 georne
 yerne in. yearn AS gyrnan
 yet: yet, nevertheless, still, even
 AS gīt
 yeven inf. give; yeve 3 pr. s.; gaf,
 yaf pt. s.; yeve imp., pp. AS
 giefan
 yevinge: giving
 yfalle pp. fallen
 yfeere: together ME in fere
 yfet pp. fetched
 yfetered pp. fettered, chained
 yfeyned pp. pretended, evaded
 yflatered: flattered
 yfolowed pp. followed
 yformed pp. formed
 yfostred: fostered, brought up
 yfounded pp. found

yfounded pp.; founde: founded,
 established
 yfynde inf.
 yghe: eye; cf. ye
 yglasyd pp. glazed
 yglewed pp. glued
 yglosed pp. flattered
 ygo, ygoon pp. gone, devoted him-
 self
 ygraunted pp. granted
 ygrave, grave pp. cut out, dug out
 ygret pp. greeted
 ygrounde pp. ground, sharpened
 ygrounded pp. grounded, fixed
 yhad pp. had
 yharded pp. hardened
 yhedde pp. hidden
 yheere inf. hear
 yhent pp. collected, taken
 yhid pp. hid
 yholde pp. held, esteemed
 yhurt pp. hurt
 yif: if AS gif
 yif imp. give; cf. yive
 yifte: gift; cf. Icel gift
 yis: yes
 yit, yitte: yet AS gýt
 yive inf. give; yif imp.; yive pp.
 AS giefan
 ykaught pp. caught; cf. cacche
 ykorven pp. cut
 yknowe inf. know; pp.
 ykoude pp. known well
 ylad pp. carried, led
 ylaft pp. left
 yle: isle; bareyne yle] Naxos OF
 isle
 yleyd pp. laid
 ylik a. like, alike
 ylike ad. alike, equally AS gelice
 Ylioun: the citadel of Troy
 ylke: same; cf. ilke
 yloren pp. lost
 ylyche a. of one mind, constant
 ylyche ad. alike, equally AS
 gelice
 ylyk a. like
 ylymed pp. limed, caught (as birds
 are)
 ymaad pp. made, caused
 yimages sb. pl. images to be used
 as charms in treating patients A
 418 OF.

ymaginatyf: given to illusion or suspicion OF.
 ymaginyng: considering, plotting
 ymagynacioun: imagination, fancy
 ymaked pp. made
 ymet pp. met
 ymeynd pp. mingled AS mengan
 ympes: shoots AS impa
 ympne: hymn OF hymne
 ynche: inch AS ynche
 Ynde: India
 ynde a. indigo, blue OF inde
 ynl: inwardly, deeply
 ynogh, ynough: enough AS genōh
 ynowe: enough
 yok: yoke AS geoc n.
 yolle 3 pr. pl. cry aloud; yolliden
 pt. pl. AS gyllan
 yond: yonder AS geond
 yong, yonge: young AS geong
 yooore, yore: formerly, of old, from
 a long time past; yore ago] long
 ago AS gēara
 York, My Lady of: daughter of
 K. Pedro of Spain
 youlyng sb. outcry
 youre, youres: yours
 yourselfen: yourself
 youth, youthe: youth, period of
 youth AS geoguð, iugoþ f.
 yow, yowe: you, to you
 yowthe: youth
 ypayed pp. paid
 Ypermistra: Hypermnestra saved
 her husband, Lino, from death
 yplesed pp. pleased
 Ypocras: Hippocrates, celebrated
 Greek physician of the time of
 Socrates; the greatest of ancient
 physicians Du 571
 ypocras: a sweet wine, spiced and
 put through a strainer. (Hippoc-
 rates' sleeve, so-called) C 306
 ypocrisye: hypocrisy OF hypocri-
 sie
 ypocryte: hypocrite
 Ypolita: Hippolyta, queen of the
 Amazons, wife of Theseus
 Ypomendon: Hippomedon, one of
 the Seven against Thebes
 Ypotys: Ypotis is a Middle English
 poem, religious rather than ro-
 mantic
 yprayed pp. invited

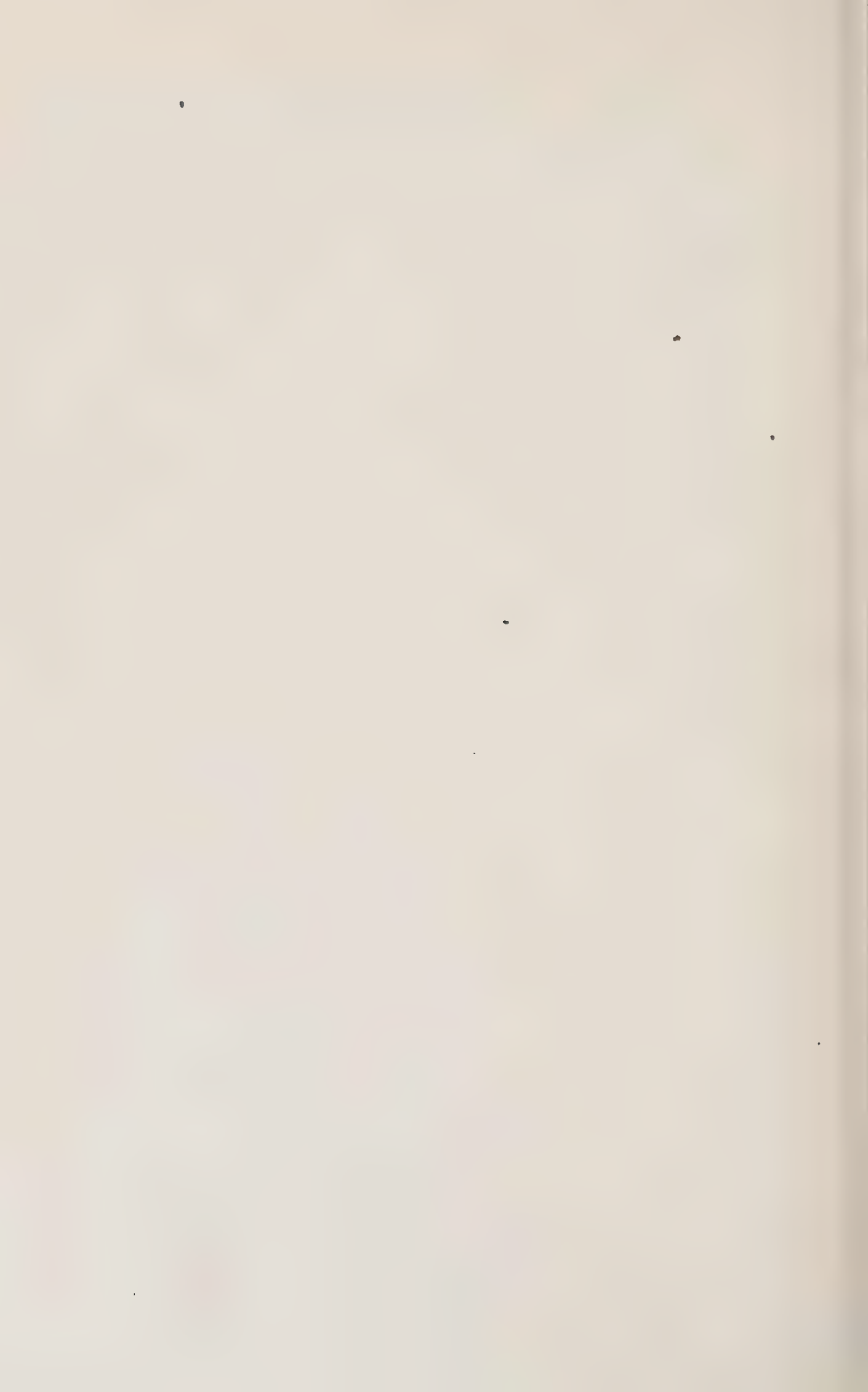
Ypres: city in Flanders, famous for
 its cloth
 y-preved pp. proved
 ypunysshed pp. punished
 ypurfiled pp. edged with fur
 yquit pp. acquitted
 yraft pp. seized
 yre: ire, anger OF ire
 yreke pp. raked together, as the
 dying embers in the ashes
 yrekened pp. counted
 yrent pp. torn
 yronne pp. run, run together,
 clustered
 yryn: iron AS iren
 ysayd, ysayed pp. said
 yscalded pp. scalded
 yse, ysee inf. see; ysene pp.
 ysene pp. visible
 ysent pp. sent
 yserted pp. served, treated
 yset pp. set, placed, appointed
 yseyled pp. sailed
 yshapen pp. shaped, formed
 yshave pp. shaved
 yshette pp. shut
 yshewed pp. shown
 yshorn pp. shorn
 yshryve, ysshryven pp. shriven
 Ysiphile: Hypsipyle, queen of
 Lemnos, wedded to and deserted
 by Jason
 yslawe pp. slain
 yslayn pp. slain
 ysoghte pp. sought
 ysongen pp. sung
 ysowe pp. sown
 ysprad pp. spread
 yspreynd pp. sprinkled
 ystiked pp. thrust, stabbed
 ystonge pp. stung
 ystorve pp. dead
 ystrawed pp. strewn
 ystynt pp. ended
 yswonke pp. labored
 yswore pp. sworn F 325
 ysworn pp. sworn A 1132
 Ytaille: Italy
 ytake pp. taken
 ytaught pp. taught, trained
 yteyd pp. tied
 ythonked pp. thanked
 ythrowe pp. cast out
 ytoold pp. told

yturned pp. turned
 yve: ivy; herb yve] ground pine
 AS ifig
 yvel a. evil AS yfel
 yvele ad. evil; me list ful yvele]
 it does not please me
 yvory, yvoyre: ivory OF ivoire
 yvoyded pp. removed
 ywarned pp. warned
 ywedded pp. married
 ywis: certainly, truly ME gewiss
 ywoundid pp. wounded
 ywrien pp. hidden

ywriten pp. written
 ywroght pp. wrought
 ywrye pp. covered
 ywympled pp. covered with a
 wimple
 ywys: truly

Z

Zanzis: Zeuxis, Greek painter men-
 tioned by Cicero
 Zephirus: Zephyrus, the gentle
 west wind



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